

Sikhism *and* *The* Sikhs



Sirdar Kapur Singh

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Sikhism and the Sikhs

SIKHISM And The SIKHS

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SIKHISM AND THE SIKHS

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A tribute to Sirdar Kapur Singh

Socrates Dissatisfied

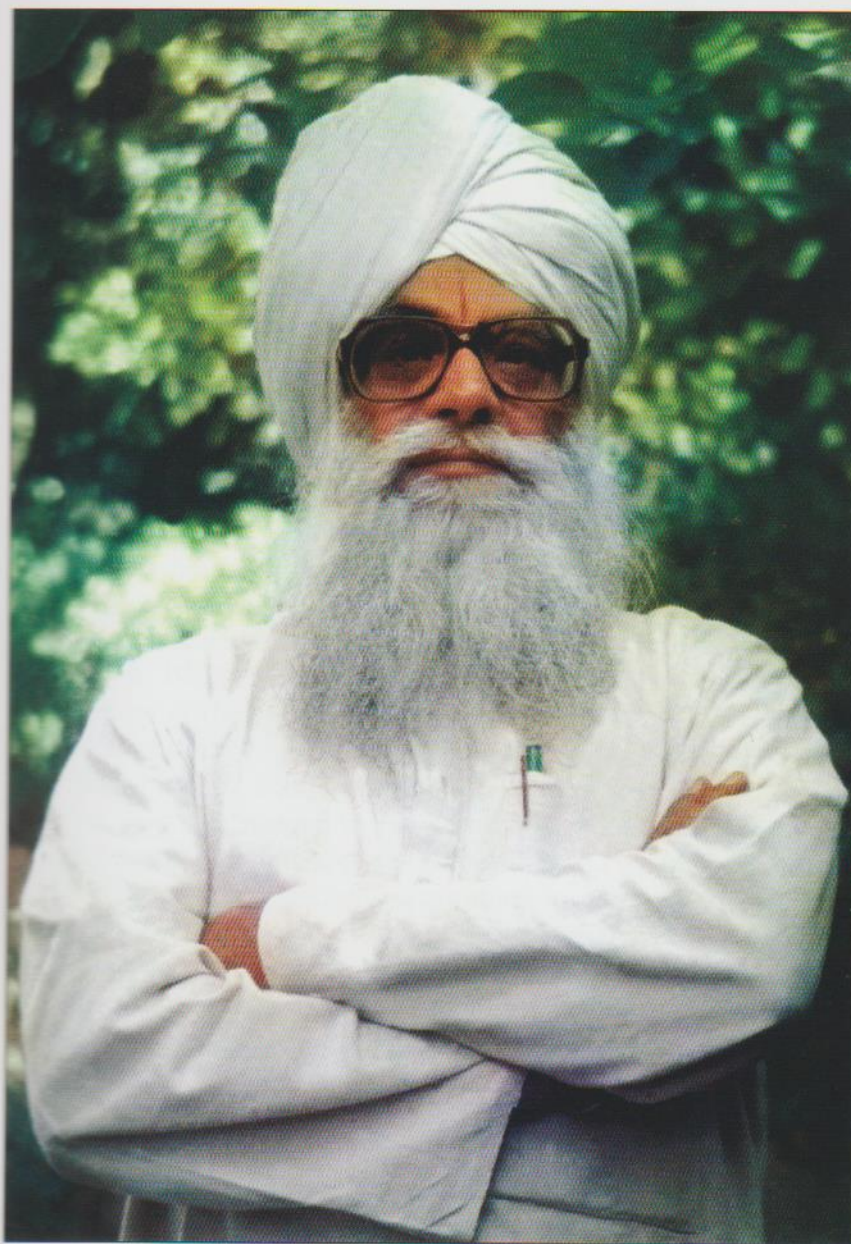
“It is better to be human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied, better to be a Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied. And if the fool or the pig is of different opinion, it is because they know their side of the question. The other party to the comparison knows both sides.”

JOHN STUART MILL

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Sirdar Kapur Singh
(1909-1986)

Editor's Note

Late Sirdar Kapur Singh (1909 – 1986) was philosopher-politician of the Sikhs. Some even talked of him as 'Socrates of the Sikhs'. No doubt he was the most intellectual Sikhs in the 20th century, who had comparative knowledge of world religions of the East and the West. He was strongest protagonist of Sikh-homeland within Union of India on the pattern of Art. 370 of the constitution of India, but his views/ideas could not be understood by the Sikhs and their leaders. Once he wrote to me in 1973, "do not have excessive faith in the sound judgement of the Sikh masses. They rarerly come to the right decision at the right moment as I have found out from reading the Sikh history." Some even thought that he was Khalistani. But no, he never wanted to break India. He even advised Sant Jarnail Singh Bhindrawale against that demand when the Sant invited him to Harimandar for consultations. Once he told me that those who make such a demand are ignorant of ground realities. He did not elaborate but it is easy for any pragmatic mind to understand such a situation. He had seen how East Pakis were massacred by West Pak Army. How Kashmiris are struggling for eluding 'Azadi' for decades. Sikhs themselves had tasted the heat of fire of India Army in June 84. Punjab situation was and is also very different from others, half population is non-Sikhs. Even Akalis were not for it, castes had divided them. Therefore, Kapur Singh's strategy was of survival and defensive and not offensive. There is popular saying, "people get leader they deserve" or in other words, "people are recognised by the leader they choose."

Most of non-political writings of the Sirdar are published by the Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. But there are numerous scholarly articles which have not been included in Sirdar's collected works published by the university. I have collected and edited those writings and getting these published in the present volume on my behalf. I hope readers would benefit in understanding of the Sikh religious-political philosophy as interpreted by Late Sirdar Kapur Singh. The year 2009 is his birth centenary. It could be a sort of tribute to him from a humble pupil like me.

He was member of Lok Sabha (Parliament) from 1962-67 (Ludhiana). He was discriminated against in life but in death also he was not spared. When he died on 1986 he was not paid tribute in Lok Sabha. I got this information under the RTI Act-05. A tradition violated under the Rajiv Gandhi Government after killing of his mother Mrs Indira Gandhi by her Sikh body guards. At that time Punjab was hot bed of militancy, after Sikh genocide in Delhi and other cities.

26.11.09

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SPIRITUAL GOAL AND SIKH IDENTITY

God in His pleasure and discretion communicated with man through the word of the Guru, by filling the Guru's personality with His presence to make the basic distinction between 'revelation' and 'literature', by assigning to the former the validity of the true guidance for man in matters of his ultimate concern.

The word of the Guru clearly distinguished the Sikh mysticism of personality from the hitherto accepted Jainist and Buddhist mysticism of infinite, the one that aims at the denial of self, the vehicle of God's Will, and the other that aims at its complete annihilation.

The Sikh formularies sternly declare a fault-finding approach towards other religions as anathema. The fundamental dogma of Sikhism and its epiphany is that all the historical manifestations of the Sikh Gurus constitute one historical Personality in continuous movement through ten corporalities, and God of Sikhism is a God of revelation Who, on His Own initiative, presses towards revealing Himself. This dogma is the starting point of Sikhism and is fundamental to its understanding and practice.

From this concept of summum bonum follows the new definition of and also the new content of what Guru Amar Das imparted to the fundamental concept of the Absolute Reality, conceived as *sat-cit-anand* in Hindu spiritual tradition. True understanding and pursuit of this last component of the Absolute Reality, *ananda*, has engaged the Hindu mind throughout the ages, conceiving of it as the seedless and featureless trance, where the mind, in its utter unflickering

emptiness, is somehow, awake and aware of this unsullied and altogether unsettled nothingness, and in another way, relating it to pure bodily well-being.

Mohsin Fani, a Zoroastrian contemporary of Nanak, the Sixth (1595-1649), on the basis of correspondence with the Guru, specifically mentions this Sikh dogma as fundamental to Sikhism. The dogma is reiterated at numerous places in the text of Guru Granth.

The scientific fact about Sikhism is that it is neither a syncretism, an amalgam of other religions and creeds, nor a sect of Hinduism or Islam, as has been variously asserted from time to time by numerous authorities.

It is an autonomous, independent religion, complete and whole, with its validity inhering in its revelations and proclamations, such as are repeatedly made in its literature, and its historical movement. The newly developed science of religion and its critique categorise all higher world religions into mystic and prophetic religions. The basis of mystic religions is anonymous experiences of individuals.

The prophetic religions, on the other hand, arise out of a confrontation of an individual, the Prophet, with God in the relationship of 'I and Thou', in the phraseology made famous by Martin Buber (1878-1965). As an authority on the subject explains it, "What is important in the mystic acts is that something happens. What is important in the prophetic acts is that something is said."

The religions taking their birth in the middle east, such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, are prophetic religions, while those arising in India such as Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism are mystic or speculative religions. Sikhism is the only prophetic religion that ever arose in the east, i.e. India. The question of its sectarian or subordinate character and status in relation to any Indian religion, therefore, simply cannot arise in any scientific judgement. This position is repeatedly asserted in Guru Granth itself.

This, along with the record left by, and pertaining to the

great medieval and modern Christian mystics, as well as the prestigious *Sufi* tradition of Islam, reveals that the goals are of two kinds, distinct and distinguishable, one of the mystic religions and the other of the prophetic religions.

Reynold Nicholson writes explaining the nature and goal of Islamic mysticism that, "Unlike *nirvana*, which is merely the cessation of individual; the *fanah*, the passing away of the *Sufi* from his phenomenal existence, involves *baqa*. "*Baqa* means the continuance of his real existence and personality. He who dies to self, lives in God, and *fanah*, the consummation of his death, makes the attainment of *baqa*, the union with Divine Life."

The goal of Sikh mysticism, as revealed in Guru Granth and the Dasam Granth of Guru Gobind Singh, is indubitably the goal of *baqa* of *Sufi* mysticism, not irrecoverable dissipation and merger of personality in the neutral Absolute Reality, the Brahma, through *nirvana* and *mukti*, but perpetuation of personality.

This perpetual personality is through its phenomenal death and by its rise into unison with the person of God, so that the liberated soul, the *brahmagyani*, becomes a vehicle of God's Will in transcendent relationship as well as in the creative process of God. That is what is meant when Guru Granth says that "a liberated soul is filled with zeal of cosmic welfare." This is what is meant when the Guru (Gobind Singh) says that, though he had achieved "complete and full unison with God," yet God sent him back to propagate *dharma*.

This ultimate concern of man, according to Sikhism, the goal of establishing permanent unison with the Transcendent Reality, the person of God, *Akal Purkh*, clearly separates and distinguishes Sikhism as a religion, apart from an independent of the Hindu and Buddhist spiritual tradition. The claim of Sikhism as an independent and autonomous world religion is no naive or empty boast or a presumptuous claim. It is demonstrably valid and scientific assertion.

There are no songs of *nirvana* in the Sikh doctrine and no

hungering for peace of nothingness, utter death, emptiness or immobile little rest, *shanti*, here.

Not scattering of personality or cleavage of individuality, *karvat* to achieve submergence into the sum total of eternal substance, Brahma, is the acceptable goal in Sikhism, nor unrealizable and unfulfilled human yearning for an utterly inaccessible God is the Sikh doctrine and vision of religious quest, but an abiding unison of the nature of a love-duet between man and God. God, the Creator of man and the Immortal Brahma, is Sikhism's teaching.

APPRECIATION OF SIKHISM

There is one dogma and one scientific truth without understanding both of which Sikhism cannot be properly appreciated. There are two approaches to understand and appreciate a religion—one valid and legitimate and the other invalid and arbitrary. The valid approach is that of auto-interpretation, i.e., interpretation according to the basic postulates and doctrines of that religion itself, and the other, arbitrary and presumptuous approach is that of hetero-interpretation, that seeks to evaluate and judge a religion according to postulates and norms hostile or alien of itself. This latter is the domain of polemics and confrontation and not of understanding and approbation. Hetero-interpretation is, in the poetic imagery of Gitanjali, as if "a jewel has come to the garden to test excellence of rose flower by rubbing it against its touchstone." In Sikhism auto-interpretation of religion alone is approved. The Sikh scripture lays down that, "a sympathetic approval towards a religion is alone fruitful and satisfying, while an attitude of acrimony and fault-finding is frustrative."

GURU NANAK AND COMPOSITE CULTURE*

It has been customary to regard Guru Nanak as a medieval *bhakta* or a saint in class with Ramanuj, Kabir, Dadu, Vallabha and Chaitanya who, under the impact of Moslem political domination and Sufi mysticism of Islam, endeavoured to discover underlying identities between Hinduism and Islam and to integrate religious discipline and experience to their primal source of emotion, rather than dogma and intellection. Indeed, Guru Nanak not only in the historical perspective was close to this movement but he also assented with the fundamental motivations of these saints and *bhaktas*. But he was much more and he falls into a type altogether apart and this is the first point I would like to make out.

Guru Nanak was not a mere saint, for, a saint is one who manifests in his life the true essence of an already established creed. Guru Nanak is emphatic that, "I can think of no one entitled to claim my allegiance as a matter of right."¹ He was not a *bhakta* proper, for, he repudiated the basic tenets of the medieval Bhakti Movements of India, namely, the doctrine of *avatarvad* and devotional worship of one form of the already manifest Vishnu, through utter and unreserved devotion, although he accorded a high place to integration of trained emotions in the life of a religious person.

In particular, Guru Nanak is the first prophet born in

* Inaugural Address on Guru Nanak Quin-Centenary Seminar held at Delhi University on the 6th and 7th March, 1970.

1. ਬੌਜਦਿ ਸੁਭੈ ਕੋ ਨਹੀ ਬਹੈ ਦੁਲੀਚਾ ਪਾਇ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 936)

India in the sense of one who claims that the religion he preaches is a revealed religion. A revealed religion is one which is imparted through a chosen individual as a consequence of his encounter with God. It is not the result of a mystical experience of a facet of reality acquired by an individual through discipline or innate propensity. It is not an impersonal empathy with some eternal truths that are seen by individuals but which, in their origin and formulation, are wholly and utterly unman-made, *apaurshaya*, such as the Vedas are. The religious truths which Guru Nanak preaches have been revealed to him, to so Guru Nanak claims through a direct and face to face encounter with God, at some level of consciousness about which our psychological insights are still almost purblind, "I am completely dumb, as I am, and I speak, as I am made to."² "I preach just as the word is revealed to me."³ In this claim Guru Nanak seems to be nearer Moses and Mohammad than the *rishis* of old and the founders of religions of the modern age, though there seems to be a fundamental uniqueness about Guru Nanak's claim. The revelation of Moses on the Mount Sinai was altogether visual and perceptual and the form of this manifestation was unambiguously mundane and material, being recovery and gift of written tablet of Commandments from a Power that had the appearance of a burning bush. Likewise, the revelation of Mohammad is both visual and audible, in the form of Gabriel, described by Mohammad in such detail—with a human face and the body wings of a parrot—and in the form of emblazoned writ, that Mohammad was commanded to read and on being unable to do so was physically choked and manhandled, till he could repeat the written word and subsequently read it. This is, al-Quran, that which was read and spoken. The *rishis* grasped, without necessarily comprehending, eternal sounds, i.e. *sruti*, and then passed

2. ਹਉ ਆਪਹੁ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਮੈ ਕਹਿਆ ਸਭੁ ਹੁਕਮਾਉ ਜੀਉ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 763)

3. ਜੈਸੀ ਮੈ ਆਵੈ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਬਾਣੀ ਤੈਸੜਾ ਕਰੀ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਵੇ ਲਾਲੇ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 722)

them on to future generation in mnemonic formulae. These *risks* or texts of the Veda are un-man made and eternal, *apaurshaya* and *anadi*, though not necessarily concinnus, for, the language of gods has to be cryptic and obscure.⁴ Guru Nanak's revelation is of an origin and form which is distinguishable from both these forms of contact with suprasensuous Truth from all accounts, he communes with the suprasensuous Truth with immediacy and simultaneously that Truth is fashioned into a mould of poetry and song. For, as Bergson has pointed out, "before intellection, properly so called, there is the perception of structure and rhythm."

This is one aspect of Guru Nanak which requires a careful study by men of learning such as the present assembly.

Next to the nature of the matrix of Guru Nanak's teachings comes the content thereof and this also would naturally attract the attention of those assembled here.

The teachings of Guru Nanak have been carefully preserved through written word in the Sikh Scripture *Guru Granth*, and it is designated as *gur-bani*. i.e. the Words of Light. This *gur-bani* has to be studied in the context of the times and the historical perspective in which Guru Nanak was born, for, prophets of religion like other people are also rooted in time and place. The form in which they cast their ideas no less than the techniques of communication they adopt, are largely fashioned by the habits of thought and action which prevail around them. Great minds may make unique contributions of enduring value to the thought of their age, and they may say that which cannot be logically traced back to antecedents. They may say that which is a class by itself, a unique *genere*, which has no precursor or successor. But they cannot altogether transcend the age in which they live. A *rishi* or a prophet while perceiving or grasping a hitherto unknown facet of Truth, does not cease to belong to his age. Just as he is arising most above it, he is truly rooted in it. Thoughts and

4. vakarokati kamahi devah.

insights into the Reality do not make incongruous leaps and they advance to new concepts and higher planes and wider dimensions through re-interpretation or transvaluation of the old ones. This was the point Gautam, the Buddha made when he described his teachings as, *esho dhammam sanatanam*. This applies to Guru Nanak also. An evaluation and appraisal of Guru Nanak's teachings, therefore, is not possible without first delineating their context and background. The Muslim power had already been firmly established in India by the 16th century and the imperial hegemony of Tughlaqs and Khiljis had impressed its stamp on the whole of the sub-continent. The Hindus no longer dreamt of throwing out the foreigners from their sacred soil, though a struggle for survival, the ease of survival, was still very much in evidence. A Muslim minority, an alien culture, and an indigestible society saddled at the back of India and planted in the midst of Hindu scene was the most glaring characteristic of the Indian scene when Guru Nanak was born. "In every household the Muslim form of address and on everyone the stamp of an alien culture and a strange speech the mode of intercommunication", as Guru Nanak describes it.⁵

What enabled a comparatively small foreign garrison to maintain its supremacy over Hindustan, the Punjab and Bengal, was its religious homogeneity and the impossibility of any unanimity among the Hindus. From them the spirit of caste has, for ages, ousted the sentiments of nationality. Caste despises the caste or resents in caste the assumption of superiority. The Brahmin condemns the cultivator; the cultivator resents the attitude of the Brahmin; both despise the menial. Each Rajput clan deems itself the superior of any other and there never has been an Indian nation.⁶

When Shihab-ud-din Ghauri finally defeated Prithvi Raj

5. ...ਸੀਆ ਸਭਨਾ ਜੀਆਂ ਬੋਲੀ ਅਵਰ ਤੁਮਾਰੀ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 1191)

6. Cambridge Shorter History of India, J. Allen et. al. New Delhi, 1969, p. 249.

at Taraori, his royal neighbour, Jai Chandra is recorded as having ordered a public holiday and state festivities in his kingdom. A more or less contemporary account tells us that the defeat of Prithvi Raj which resulted in a firm occupation of Indian soil by the Muslim invaders was regarded as an occasion of national rejoicing by those whose turn was to come next :

In every house, thresholds were washed "with butter-fat to mark the auspicious occasion and trumpets were publicly sounded to celebrate it."⁷

This state of affairs had reduced the condition of Hindus, the original natives of the soil, by the 15th century to such a state that :

Non-Muslims (are) the furniture and properties for the stage on which the drama of the Muslim destiny in Hindustan is played. The Hindus are as the passive material on which the Muslims impose their will. It is the function of the Hindus to provide opportunities for the practice of Muslim virtue; they are never interesting in themselves, but only as converts, as capitation tax-payers or as corpses.⁸

Arnold Toynbee, one of the modern prophet-historians, explains the growth and decline of every civilization and culture in terms of his *challenge and response* theory. The life and durability of a civilization or culture depends upon the type of challenges which it encounters during its life-span and on as to whether it can throw an adequate response to the challenge. If it does, it survives and grows and if it cannot, it is defeated and it dies.

First and foremost, the religion which Guru Nanak revealed and preached must be tested by this touchstone. To meet the challenge of Muslim political and cultural onslaught from the 11th century onwards, into the north of India and

7. grihe grihe ghriteno dumbarakshalan marbdham turya pravvrate—Jai Chandraprabandham in *Puratan Prabundha-Samgraha*.

8. Prof. F. Hardy, *Historians of Medieval India*, p. 114.

then enveloping the whole of India, evoked three responses. One was physical resistance which though brave and stout, eventually collapsed. The second response was of a negative character through which the Hindus evolved a form of strict seclusion of Hinduism by a rigid imposition of rules of caste and the rituals and ceremonials of religion. Throughout the Middle Ages the Hindus shut themselves off in their castles of caste-regulations, expecting that these restrictive limitations might stop the flood-gates of wholesale conversion to Islam. This they, indeed, did but not without grave damage for, once a Hindu was found guilty of the slightest violation of the most rigid caste rules of exclusion, he would be lost to the Hindu community forever: "For, the immovable castles behind which the Hindus sheltered had only, exit but no entrance."⁹ The third type of response was the emergence of saints throughout India who attempted to build, on the basis of identities rather than differences, in the Muslim and Hindu cultures, a bridge of understanding between the contending parties. Ramanand, Kabir, Chaitanya, point out the basic identity of Allah and Ram, stressing on piety of heart and sincere devotion as the only valid means of salvation for Hindus and Muslims alike. But as the keen students of Indian History know, the impact of this attempt has never been very significant except in the domain of abstract religious thought and its practical influence was confined to small fraternities so widely scattered over the country as made them unable to play any significant role in the history of India. The tragic fate that overtook the cultured prince Dara Shikoh at the hands of bigot Aurangzeb is truly illustrative of the eventual destiny of such resistance to the type of challenge which the Hindus had to face. Guru Nanak fashioned a response which was perfected and implemented by the successor Nanaks and the Sikh community, consisting of certain basic and fundamental ideas, all of which originate from the teachings of Guru

9. Dr. R.C. Majumdar, *The Sikh Review*, Calcutta, Vol. XVIII, p. 170.

Nanak. The first and the natural response to aggression, that of resistance, stout resistance, which had collapsed in the case of Hindus, was revived and taken up, fortified by a regeneration of its spiritual foundations. In his hymns, called *Babar Bani*, Guru Nanak succinctly adumbrates two new concepts that must form the basis of human response to such a situation. The first is that the evil, unless resisted, grows and endures and does not wither away or die by itself. That is true, at least, for all practical purposes. The evil, therefore, must be resisted by human effort and destroyed, 'with the help of God.' But the evil must not be left alone till God on High, chooses to intervene to destroy it. The temper of the doctrine of *avatarvad*, which forms the bedrock foundation of Hindu outlook is essentially this that, evil either is destroyed by its own suicidal nature or else it is bound to be destroyed by the direct intervention of extra-terrestrial powers: "*Yada yada hi dharmasaya gilanir bhavati....., sambhavami yuge yuge,*" as the *Bhagvadgita* puts it. It is this temper of messianic expectancy which was replaced by a temper of positive human concern and responsibility that ultimately shaped the type of response which Sikhism furnished to the onslaught of Islam. The heart-rending cry and the audacious questions of Guru Nanak put to God on witnessing the misery caused by Babar to undefended and unarmed civilians of India, "just as a herd of meek cows is attacked by a blood-thirsty tiger,"¹⁰ in the words of Guru Nanak, carries clearly the seeds of this new concept of individual, personal and human responsibility of a man to be directly concerned with evil on this earth and to resist it instead of either remaining unconcerned about it, or hoping for divine intervention to destroy it: "So much misery and so much anguish caused to the people, and their lamentations. You saw and heard, all of them, and yet You, O, God, were neither moved nor did you intervene,"¹¹ is the central cry and

10. *Sinh pave ja vagge*—Asa. 39.

11. *eti mar pai kurlane tai ki dard na aia*—Asa. 3.5.39

question of the *Babar Bani*. It was this conceptual seed which changed the entire attitude of the Sikh community to the onslaught of the Islam in India :

"...after centuries of subjection, Nanak was the first among the Hindus to raise his voice against tyranny and oppression."¹²

Sikhism concedes the doctrine of Thrasymachus¹³ that successful violence, if it is violent enough, and successful enough, does pay and may win for its practitioners all the powers and glories of the world and Sikhism enjoins, therefore, active and armed resistance to such a violence at all stages. Sikhism also shows awareness of the further teachings of Thrasymachus that successful violence can always clothe itself in the trappings of morality, and it, therefore, does not agree in allowing it an unhindered course. In this manner, Guru Nanak commingled the first response, that of physical resistance, and the third response, that of discovering common ground of identity between the conflicting cultures of Hinduism and Islam, and fashioned the fourth response which proved historically effective. Arnold Toynbee observed about this clash of Hindu and Muslim cultures that :

Their principal meeting ground had been India where Islam has impinged on Hinduism violently. On the whole the story of the relations between these two great religions on Indian ground has been an unhappy tale of mutual misunderstanding and hostility. The Sikh religion might be described, not inaccurately, as a vision of the Hindu-Muslim common ground. To have discovered and embraced the deep harmony underlying the historic Hindu-Muslim discord has been a noble spiritual triumph; and Sikh may well be proud of their new religious ethos and origin.¹⁴

12. Gokul Chand Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism*, Lahore, 1912, p. 40.

13. Plato, *Republic*, (Ch III).

14. Preface to *Selections from the Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, UNESCO, 1959, pp. 9-10.

This estimate of the contribution of Guru Nanak to the solution of the fundamental problem of his times, is supported by modern Hindu judgment also as :

He (Guru Nanak) cut himself adrift from all association with the prevailing sectarian religions and although his approach to God was through love and devotion, he did not adopt the imagery or symbolism of vaishnavism or any other creed. His was the first and also the last successful attempt to bring together the Hindus and Muslims in a common fold of spiritual and social brotherhood..... The political achievement of Sikhism have largely overshadowed its spiritual character, but it is this latter aspect alone with which the name of Nanak must be associated.¹⁵

The other element in the basic attitude which Guru Nanak fashioned was a re-interpretation of the age old Hindu doctrine of non-involvement with the world as the only proper attitude for a cultured man, *nishkamkarma*. The doctrine of *nishkamkarma* is pivotal in the *Bhagvadgita*¹⁶ and the term, *nishkamkarama*¹⁷, is not only retained but upheld in the revelatory poems of Guru Nanak and the successor Nanaks ! But the term has been re-interpreted to mean a passionate and full blooded response to a given challenge and situation but not surrendering before it one's inner poise. The question of Guru Nanak in the *Babar Bani* addressed to God Almighty, (ਤੈ ਗੋ ਦਰਦੁ ਨ ਆਇਆ) means just what Chekov makes his hero, Gromov, say in ward No. 6 :

I react to pain with tears and cries, to baseness with indignation, to vileness with disgust and that in my opinion is life ! to despise the suffering would be

15. *History and Culture of the Indian people*, Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1969, Vol. VI, p. 569.

16. *tyaktva karamphalasangam nityatripto nirashayah*. iv. 20.

17. *Jaise jal mahi kamal niralamu murgai nai sane* - Sidh Ghost; *karam karat hovai nihkaram* - sukhmani. Nanak 5.

tentamount to despising life itself, for man's whole existence consists of sensations of hunger, cold, mortification, loss and a hamlet like fear of death."¹⁸

Thus the entire Hindu character of those who accepted Guru Nanak was transformed into a new type, through re-interpretation of certain fundamental insights of the Hindu race into things and reality, but without altogether destroying or replacing those insights. Incidentally, thus was also answered the most formidable criticism against Hinduism recently made by Albert Schweitzer that Hinduism was a religion of cerebration, which when it does, thinks that it does and when it feels, merely thinks that it feels. Secondly Guru Nanak, through his teachings, laid firm foundations for a democratic society by repudiating caste and social privileges by birth. Many seers and saints of India before Guru Nanak had preached irrelevance of caste to spiritual attainments but none before Guru Nanak had repudiated the caste on its social and political planes. The position, substantially, has remained as is laid down in the Sakat philosophical text "On the spiritual plane, castelessness and in the social and political spheres, strict observance of caste distinctions."¹⁹ Guru Nanak repudiated caste altogether totally and laid firm foundation for a modern democratic society. His third contribution was with regard to social and spiritual status of women. Claim is frequently made by the advocates of Islam that it accords a most enviable status to women in society. While it is true that the precepts of Mohammad vastly improved the status of women as it obtained in pre-Islamic Arabia, it cannot be claimed that Koran grants women equality before law or equality of opportunity which is the essence of equality of status in the modern world. "Men have mastery over women"

18. A.P. Chekov, *Short Novels and Stories* (English tr. by Litvinov), Moscow, pp. 187-88.

19. pravithe bhairava cakre sarve varnah dvijottamah nivritte bhairava cakre sarve varnah prithak prithak - *Mahanirvana tantra*. IX. 179.

is the basic refrain of Koran on the subject of women as determined by God.²⁰ In our own culture, Hinduism, women have been treated with a great deal of respect and romantic sentimentality but it will not be claimed by any serious student of Hinduism that equality between man and women, in the modern sense, is a postulate of Hinduism. In Rig Veda itself, We have a dialogue hymns²¹ in which mortal Pururvas tries but fails to persuade nymph Urvashi to continue to live with him, as the lure of paradise is too much for the fickle minded female. This Vedic hymn contains the following parting words of Urvashi to her lover :

Pururvas, don't die, don't perish, let not the cruel wolves devour you. The friendship of woman is never firm. For, they are hyenas in heart.

That women are congenitally inferior to men is a Vedic postulate. In *Manavadharmasāstra* women are referred to with much tenderness and reverence : *yatra bharya pujante ramnatra tatra devatah* but in the operative context of this ancient code a woman's status has been laid down as that of a triple and eternal subordination to man just as in Chinese Confucian culture the identical concept, *Tam Tong*, indicates which means, 'Three Woman's subordinations'. According to it, in a patrilineal society woman must remain subordinate to her father before her marriage, to her husband after her marriage and to her sons when widow.²² In the Buddhist estimation, the status of woman undergoes no improvement :

How, lord, are we to conduct ourselves with regard to womankind ? 'Don't see them, Ananda. But if we see them, what are we to do ? 'Abstain from speech'. 'But if they should speak to us, what are we to do ?' Keep wide awake.

20. Ram Ram sabhko kahai, kahiai Ram na hoe.

Gurparsadi Ram man vasai tan phal pavai koe.

(Gujri, 3)

21. X-95, 15.

22. Pita rakshati kaumare bharta rakshai yauvane, rakshanti sthavare putrah na satrim swatantrayam arhati.

When Ananda won from the Master the right for women to enter Samgha, the Buddha remarked :

"If, Ananda, the women had not received the permission to enter the Order, the good religion would have lasted long, the pure law would have stood for a thousand years but, now it will stand fast only for 500 years !" ²³

It was Guru Nanak who, for the first time, in the history of India and for the first time in the history of the world, perceived that there can be no enduring democratic culture unless grounded in unreserved recognition of full equality of woman with man. Just as in Greek society and Roman civilization, similarly in Islamic culture, it was the inferior status of woman which remained the basic weakness of these cultures, Likewise, in Hindu society the weakness of these cultures, Likewise, if Hindu society the weakest link in its social structure was the unequal status of woman and this weakness Guru Nanak removed by putting a simple question implicating the fundamental postulate of equality of man and woman : "Why call her, in any way whatsoever inferior to man, when all forms of greatness of man have their matrix in woman ?" ²⁴

Such were the contributions of Guru Nanak whose Quincentenary we are formally celebrating today. This was the man whose teachings gave birth to a religion which :

"is of a special interest since it has created not only a political society but also customs so distinctive that those who profess it, rank as a separate race." ²⁵

Now, it is a matter for consideration whether the assertion made by many modern historians of India to the effect that the social exclusivity and xenophobia of Hindus, was an attitude generated by the fears and violent impact of

23. *Mahapar inibbana sutta*, v. 23.

24. ਸੋ ਕਿਉ ਮੰਦਾ ਆਖੀਐ ਜਿਤੁ ਜੋਮਹਿ ਰਾਜਾਨੁ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 473)

25. Sir Charles Elliott, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, London, 1921, Vol II, p. 217.

political Islam is well founded or the case is that it was an integral part of the Hindu way of life from the very beginning. The great Indologist Alberuni, in his *Kitab-ul Hind* (1030 A.D.) informs us that :

All their fanaticism is directed against those who do not belong to them against all foreigners. They call them *malechhas*, i.e. as impure and forbid having connection with them, be it by inter-marriage or any other kind of relationship or by sitting, eating and drinking with them, because thereby they think they would be polluted. They consider as impure anything which touches the fire and water of a foreigner; and no household can exist without these elements. Besides, they never desire that a thing which once has been polluted should be purified and thus recovered, as under ordinary circumstance if anybody or anything has become unclean, he or it would strive to regain the state of purity. They are not allowed to receive anybody who does not belong to them even if he wishes it or was inclined to their religion.²⁶

Again, the point might be considered and discussed by this learned gathering, viz the attack levelled by Albert Schweitzer in recent years against Hinduism, the attack that it is a religion of cerebration. Cerebration means that when a person feels, he does not feel but he thinks that he feels, and when a person does, he does not do it, but he thinks that he does. I am persuaded that this is one of the two mortal attacks that have been levelled against Hinduism during the last two thousand years, the one was against idol-worship, *murtipuja* and the other is concerning this inherent characteristic of Hinduism. To the Semetic attack on *murtipuja* which originated from the commandment of Moses "Thou shalt have no graven images", the Hindus could not return an effective answer on the level of intellection and also on the level of battlefield. In

26. Alberuni's *India*, tr. by Dr. Edward C. Sachau, London, 1886, Ch. I, p. 10.

the end Hindus almost succumbed before this attack. The other attack by Albert Schweitzer appears to be equally fatal unless it is adequately defended by the Hindu savants. The point, however to consider here is whether credit or discredit it for making this attack originally goes to Albert-Schweitzer or to Abu Raihan Mohammad Ibn Ahmad Alberuni (973-1348 AD) who in his *Kitab-ul-Hind* tells us that :

On the whole there is very little disputing about theological topics among themselves (Hindus) : at the utmost, they fight with words but they will never stake their soul or body or their property on religious controversy.²⁷

Lastly, this assembly of the learned might take up for discussion the teachings of Guru Nanak and the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi whose centenary is also being celebrated during this year on the subject of human attitude towards evil. About Guru Nanak's teachings on the subject a reference has already been made. Mahatma Gandhi's teachings are subsumed under the word, *satyagraha* literally, "holding fast to truth". Of this *satyagraha*, protest fasting is an integral part, a practice of which we have seen much-some would say, too much in recent years in our country. *Satyagraha* is of two kinds: individual and collective, and protest-fasting is an approved form of individual *satyagraha*. Leaving stunt fasts aside, it would seem clear after, a careful reflection and examination of concrete instances that fast can be practised only in a liberal socio-political set-up and it can be practised only against a sympathetic adversary. Even then it may not always to the opponent yielding any ground. Even when he makes the necessary concessions there is no certainty that he has done so out of conviction or a change of heart. It follows that even when successful, fast is not true *satyagraha*, viz, the acceptance of that what is true by both the parties concerned. With regard to the non-violent group-resistance, it is true that it can

27. Alberuni's *India*, tr. by Dr. Edward C. Sachau, London, 1886, Ch, I, p. 10.

highlight local injustices and can give a fillip to popular movements and can even lead to a temporary understanding between the contending parties. There is no evidence, however, and no logical assurance that *satyagraha* can hope to resolve permanently a basic conflict caused by deep-rooted historical, political or social factors. In short, *satyagraha*, in the form of defiance of violence through non-violence can act as a palliative but hardly a cure for a fundamental social or political conflict. Again *satyagraha* pre-supposes for its success the presence of a relatively liberal political system but in a political system fundamentally hostile to the other party or otherwise dictatorial in texture will demonstrably render impossible to organise a successful or effective *satyagraha*. The words of the well-known philosopher Karl Jaspers are pertinent here that :

In the struggles against totalitarianism Gandhi's procedure would not be political way out but a way to certain doom. Every sacrifice would be secret, rendered without publicity, untouchable in its metaphysical substance, to be sure; but unknown to men. Because no echoes would reach the public, no political consequences would result. Against a terror that knows no restrictions by legal or conscientious qualms, sacrifice is futile in so far as it remains outside the communication of human activities.

By giving expression to these stray thoughts and without venturing any dogmatic answer to the questions posed, I have pleasure in opening this Seminar with the hope and prayer that the deliberations of its learned participants may result in solid conclusions. Thank you.

AN INCOMPARABLE PROPHET GURU AMAR DASS

Guru Amar Dass (1479-1574), Nanak the Third, is referred to as "an incomparable prophet" in the Sikh scripture,¹ not in the sense of unparalleled qualitative superiority or imperial spiritual status, for, according to Sikh doctrines there is no social hierarchy in the World of the Spirit and no gradation of excellence or rank amongst God's prophets or men otherwise 'filled with God', the Sikh scripture refers to all true prophets and men filled with the Holy Spirit, as 'coequal and entitled to utmost reverence'², but there are differences of identity and in the aroma of the time-climate in which the prophets and the messengers of God manifest themselves and operate. It is in this sense that Guru Amar Dass is referred to as 'incomparable' in the Guru Granth. The epiphany of the spiritual effulgence of Guru Amar Dass occurred in the second half of the 16th Century when, in an obscure corner of India, he appeared in the religious firmament of the world as a quasar, quasi-star but has been commonly regarded as a mere asteroid. A 'quasar' is a distinct heavenly body distinguishable by its extraordinary radio-action, smaller than galaxies, yet emitting many million times of energy released by any ordinary star. A quasar is incredibly luminous though such stellar objects are estimated to be about 5,300 million light-years away from us, while an asteroid or

1. ਭਲੇ ਅਮਰਦਾਸ ਗੁਣ ਤੇਰੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਉਪਮਾ ਤੋਹਿ ਬਨਿ ਆਵੈ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 1396)

2. ਨਾਨਕੁ ਵੇਚਾਰਾ ਕਿਆ ਕਹੈ ॥ ਸਭੁ ਲੋਕੁ ਸਲਾਹੇ ਏਕਸੈ ॥

ਸਿਰੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਲੋਕਾ ਪਾਵੈ ਹੈ ॥ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ਜਾਉ ਜੇਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਵੈ ਹੈ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 1168)

planetoid is just a junior member of our own solar system, just a little planet. Those who like to view Guru Nanak in his ten manifestations as *bhaktas* of Hindu vaishnavite tradition or 'saints' in the sense of highly pious Hindus, confuse a quasar with an asteroid. Nor is Guru Nanak, in any of his Manifestations, to be judged merely by their historical impact on society or history, for, we must not reduce religion to social revolutionary Marxism. As the famous Christian theologian, Haranack has said,³

"He already wounds religion who primarily asks what it has achieved for culture and progress of mankind and wants, accordingly, to determine its value. The meaning of life unfolds always in the supra-worldly spheres."

"It is in the supra-world that true worth of man is adjudged" according to the Sikh scripture⁴, for, here it is pitch dark night and there the shining light of the day"⁵, wherein alone the meaning of life and death are clearly seen.

II

In this parameteral plane it is proposed to refer briefly to the following points and facets of Nanak, the Third Guru Amar Dass, in this monograph :

1. A capsule-biography of Guru Amar Dass.
2. Ontological status of the Sikh Guru in the Sikh Dogmatics and the true place of Sikhism in the World of Religion.
3. Distinctive contributions of Guru Amar Dass to religious thought and ecclesiastical matters, such as, (a) his exegesis of the specific component, *ananda*, joy, bliss, of the Hindu comprehension of Absolute Reality, *sat-cit-anand*, that is truth-consciousness-bliss, (b) his new psychosomatic understanding of 'food' with its social implications, (c) his

3. Adolf von Haranack, *Die Mission*, 1902.

4. ਕਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਈ ਓਥੈ ਪਾਇ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 7)

5. ਓਥੈ ਦਿਹੁ ਐਥੈ ਸਭ ਰਾਤਿ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 1257)

deeper interpretation of the Hindu ideal of a 'virtuous wife', Sati, (d) his estimation of the female-principle in woman in relation to her capacity and eligibility to religious experience in its fullness and participation in religious practices and ritual, her right to preach religion and her right to administer ecclesiastical and church affairs.

4. Finally, his ideas about 'revelation' and 'literature', and his peculiar literary craftsmanship.

III

Guru Amar Dass was born on May 5, 1479. His occupation as secular man was agriculture and petty trade. He married at the age of 24 and had two sons and two daughters. He was a staunch vaishnavite Hindu who annually went on pilgrimage to Hardwar to have a dip in the Ganga and he practised austerities and regularly performed religious rituals befitting a pious Hindu. It was rather late in life that he came in contact with Nanak, the Second, Guru Angad, and was eventually consecrated as Nanak, the Third, as Guru Amar Dass in the year 1552.

For 22 years of his remaining life he preached religion and organised Sikh religious affairs with unremitting zeal and unabating exertion and the obscure village of Goindwal, near Amritsar, became, elevated to the 'Acropolis of God' in popular estimation, as the Sikh Scripture records.⁶ In the Sikh World this village became adjudged as "the Axle around which Sikhism revolves and moves forward."⁷ Here Sikhs congregated from far and near and here princes and princesses, Muslims and Hindus, Emperor Akbar and the Raja of Haripur, Kangra came to pay homage to the Guru.

Here Guru Amar Dass established his open free kitchen that served food to visitors round the clock and the Guru made it obligatory for every visitor to him to have food in this

6. ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਵਾਲੁ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਪੁਰੀ ਸਮ...॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 1400)

7. ਗੋਬਿੰਦਵਾਲੁ ਸਿੰਧੀ ਦਾ ਧੁਰਾ।

Eating House, *langar*, before coming to his presence, and the Emperor and the prince, the rich and the poor, the high caste and the low caste, all complied with this requirement.

Here the Guru had excavated and constructed a splendacious and covered, domed and bricked, huge water-reservoir, the *Baoli*, that remains firm as rock after four centuries of wear and tear, in itself no mean engineering feat that compares favourably with many of our present day 'Five-Year Plans' achievements in durability and functional utility. It also is revered as a sacred place of pilgrimage for ritual bathing for those who understand the intimate initiatory relationship between water and religious quest.

It was here that the Guru provided a solid organisational base to the Sikh church by imparting to it the permanent character that parallels but does not enter into direct rivalry with the political state and which upholds and proclaims the primacy of moral obligations and spiritual necessities of man over the coercive and merely utilitarian power and goals of the political state. He set up twenty-two bishoprics, *manjis*, co-extensive in jurisdiction with the 22 administrative regions of the contemporary Mughal Indian empire, and women were ordained and included amongst these Sikh bishops, conferring on them the right and authority to preach and administer religion and ecclesiastical affairs.

Here God, in His discretion and pleasure, communicate with man, through the Word of the Guru, 'by filling the Guru's personality with His Presence'.⁸ to make the basic distinction between 'revelation' and 'literature' by assigning the former the validity of true guidance for man in matters of his ultimate concern.

Here, the Word of the Guru, clearly distinguished the Sikh mysticism of Personality from the hitherto accepted, the Jainist and Buddhist mysticism of Infinity, the one that aims at denial to one's self so as to become the channel of Divine

Love, the vehicle of God's Will, and the other that aims at complete, utter and irrecoverable annihilation of Personality, *mukti nirvana*.

Here the Guru deepened and spiritualised the fundamental social rituals and ceremonies of birth, death and marriage by extricating them from the control and stranglehold of a hereditary and genetic priesthood of brahmins and by integrating them to the Sikh spiritual discipline for human enlightenment.

Here he issued the stern Ordinance forbidding monasticism and renunciation of the world for a man of religion, and thus emphasised the centrality of activism and world-affirmation in Sikhism.

Here, at Goindwal, Guru Amar Dass, passed away on September 1, 1574 after appointing and anointing his successor and after admonishing Sikhs 'not to view death with sorrow and grief'⁹ but to know it as a stage and station in the continuing evolution and progress of human soul.

IV

There is one dogma and one scientific truth without accepting and understanding both of which, Sikhism cannot be properly appreciated. There are two approaches to understand and appreciate a religion, one valid and legitimate and the other invalid and arbitrary. The valid approach is that of Hetero interpretation, that is, interpretation according to the basic postulates and doctrines of that religion itself, and the arbitrary and presumptuous approach is that of Hetero-interpretation that seeks to evaluate and judge a religion according to postulates and norms alien or hostile to it. This latter is the domain of polemics and confrontation and not of understanding and appreciation. Hetero-interpretation is, in the poetic imagery of the *Gitanjali* by Rabindranath Tagore, as if "a jeweller has come to the garden to test excellence of rose-flower by rubbing

9. ਮਤ ਮੈ ਪਿਛੈ ਕੋਈ ਰੋਵਸੀ ਸੋ ਮੈ ਮੂਲਿ ਨ ਭਾਇਆ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 923)

it against his touchstone." In Sikhism, auto-interpretation of a religion alone is approved. The Sikh Scripture lays down that, "a sympathetic approach towards a religion is alone fruitful and satisfying, while an attitude of acrimony and fault-finding is frustrative and self-stultifying."¹⁰ The Sikh Formularies sternly declare "a fault-finding approach towards other religions as anathema."¹¹ The fundamental dogma of Sikhism and its epiphany is that all the historical Manifestations of Sikh Gurus, the Ten Nanaks, constitute one Identical Personality in continuous movement through ten corporealities, as God of Sikhism is a God of revelation who, on His own Initiative presses towards revealing Himself. This dogma is the starting point of Sikhism and is fundamental to its understanding and practice. A dogma is a body of teachings necessary for salvation, rejection of which constitutes adamantine impediment to spiritual progress. It is in this sense that Guru Gobind Singh, Nanak the Tenth, proclaims that without accepting and understanding this dogma, "a Sikh never achieves spiritual fulfilment."¹² Bhai Gurdas (1551-1639), an unimpeachable authority on Sikhism, clearly tells us that "every historical manifestation of the Nanak is merely a change in corporeality without infringement of the identity of personality."¹³ Mohsin Fani, a Zoroastrian contemporary of Nanak, the Sixth (1595-1649) on the basis of correspondence with the Guru, specifically mentions this Sikh dogma as fundamental to Sikhism.¹⁴ The dogma is reiterated in numerous texts of the Guru Granth.¹⁵

10. ਖੋਜੀ ਉਪਜੈ ਬਾਦੀ ਬਿਨਸੈ...॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 1255)

11. avar jagat panthan hain jete,

kare ninda nahi kab-hun tete. —Chaupa Singh

ਅਵਰ ਜਗਤ ਪੰਥਨ ਹੈ ਜੇਤੇ, ਕਰੇ ਨਿੰਦਾ ਨਹੀ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਤੇਤੇ। —ਚਉਪਾ ਸਿੰਘ

12. bimu jane sidhi hath na ai.

ਬਿਮੁ ਜਾਨੇ ਸਿਧੀ ਹਾਥ ਨਾ ਆਈ।

13. ਅਵਸਤੁ ਕਾਇਆ ਪਲਟਿ ਕੈ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਹਰਿਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਵਾਰੀ।

(ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ, 1/48)

14. Dabistan-e-Mazahib (1645).

15. ਗਾਵਾਸਿ ਗੁਰੂ ਜਗ ਤਾਰਨ ਕਉ ਗੁਰ ਜੋਤਿ ਅਰਜੁਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਧਰੀ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 1409)

V

The scientific fact about Sikhism is that it is neither a syncretism, an amalgam and intellectual extraction from other religions and creed nor a sect of Hinduism or Islam as has been variously asserted from time to time by numerous authorities. It is an autonomous, independent religion, complete and whole, with its validity inheriting in its own revelations and proclamations such as are repeatedly made in the Sikh Scripture, its pious literature and its historical movement. The newly developed Science of Religion and its critique categorises all higher world-religions into the Mystic religions and the Prophetic religions. The basis of Mystic religions is anonymous experiences of individuals, while the Prophetic religions arise out of a confrontation of an individual, the Prophet, with God in the relationship of 'I and Thou', in the phraseology made famous by Martin Buber (1878-1965). As an authority on the subject explains it.

"What is important in mystical acts is that something happens. What is important in prophetic acts is that something is said."¹⁶

The religions taking their birth in the Middle East, such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam are 'prophetic' religions while those arising in India, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism are mystic or speculative religions. Sikhism is the only 'prophetic' religion that ever arose in India and the question of its sectarian or subordinate character and status in relation to any Indian religion, therefore, simply cannot arise in any scientific judgement. This position is repeatedly asserted in the sacred texts of the Guru Granth itself.

VI

Mysticism, in the sense of contact with an extrasensory Order of Reality, is the core of all higher religions. After the

16. Abraham J. Herschel, *The Prophets*, 1963.

second World War, there have been extensive and serious speculations on the modes and contents of mystical experience, in Europe that still overwhelms the East's Euro-centred mental horizons on account of its political strength and superiority of technological power. This activity has arisen out of two different and independent thrusts of, scientific enquiry and philosophic speculation, after both of these mighty movements of human mind reached a kind of cul-de-sac, a point beyond which no further travel for the human intellect seems possible. The shift of sciences into an altogether autonomous sphere after release from the shackles of theology, that of experimental experience and research, had the human intellect seems possible. The shift of sciences into an altogether autonomous sphere after release from the shackles of theology, that of experimental experience and research, had led to a world-outlook based on rational scientific concepts, in the 18th century. This is called the "first illumination" by the creative leading intellectuals. Now, during the last two decades or so, notable scientists of the 20th century, such as Albert Einstein, Max Born, Max Planck and Niels Bohr have admitted and declared the religious background of their concepts of life, of the Universe and the man. "My religion", says Albert Einstein, "consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds." Thrusts into cosmos undertaken through the modern development of astronautics, by the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. have contributed to elimination of the geo-centric conception of the world which, until 1960's and early 1970's, lay at the basis of naive religious thinking. These space programmes have also contributed to preparing the way for new religious feelings, for the world and for the life by, recognition of the unique position of man and his religion in human concerns. This feeling is adumbrated in the holy Koran (51 : 57) wherein the ultimate purpose of creation is declared as worship of God, and this feeling is explicitly asserted in the concluding sloka of the *Japu* wherein our earth is spoken of as the locus of Dharma and the

play of Good and Evil implicating ethical activity as the central concern of man. In philosophy, its classical tool, human reason, was first devalued by the English philosopher, David Hume (1711- 1776) in his *Treatise of Human Nature* wherein he showed that the truths of reason are true merely by definition, like mathematics but that the truths of the world we live in are based on experience instead of logic. This gave birth to two directions to philosophical speculation, one pursued by Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Jean Paul Sartre who hold that the only knowledge worth having is knowledge that bears directly on the human experience, and the other direction taken up has flowered into Analytical Philosophy which limits the role of reason to logic and mathematics and thus restricts philosophy's concern with the meaning, structure and precision of language. The seminal figures of Analytical Philosophy are Gottlob Frege, Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein who, the last named, used to describe his philosophy, when your today's speaker was his student at Cambridge during the thirties, as "the philosophy to end all philosophy." When pointed out that it was likely to create a serious unemployment problem for the philosophers, his reply was, "why, there is the mystic experience." About this mystic experience, Albert Einstein says that, "the most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the sower of all true science." Sigmund Freud and Karl Jung dealt the coup-de-grace to all rational truth-finding speculations by showing that human reason was a false coin, essentially a tool of human passions, a sycophant and a courtier and no more trustworthy. It is in this background that the recent poignant and intense interest in Mysticism and the data of mystical experiences throughout the ages, available for study, has arisen in the recent decades of the 20th century. Drug-culture of the modern younger generation, hippies, beatniks—the flower-children, is a fascinating product and aberration of these trends in the domains of Science and Philosophy. This 'drug culture' has its roots in the scientific and philosophic stalemate in the

Western psyche and arises out of a quest and yearning for new experiences and expanded consciousness. This is the "second illumination" of man, after the sway of rationalism of the 18th and 19th centuries that urges him to interest himself in mysticism and beckons him to a return to religion.

VII

The new understanding of the age-old experiences of man, much data about which is available for serious study in the Hindu sacred texts of Upanishads and Vedanta and Buddhist texts of Mahayan of Indian and Far Eastern origin, along with the records left by and pertaining to the great medieval and modern Christian mystics as well as the prestigious *Sufi* tradition of Islam, reveals that mystical goals are of two categories, distinct and distinguishable, one of the Mystic religions and the other of Prophetic religions. Reynold Nicholson while explaining the nature and goal of Islamic mysticism makes the point clear by saying that,

unlike *nirvana* which is merely the cessations of individuality, the *fana*, passing away of the *sufi* from his phenomenal existence involves *baqa*, the continuance of his real existence and personality. He who dies to self lives in God, and *fana*, the consummation of his death, marks the attainment of *baqa*, or union with the divine life.¹⁷

The goal of Sikh mysticism as revealed in the *Guru Granth* and the *Dasamgranth* of Guru Gobind Singh, is indubitably the goal of *baqa* of *Sufi* mysticism, not irrecoverable dissipation and merger of personality in the neutral Absolute Reality, the Brahma, through *nirvana* and *mukti*, but the perpetuation of personality, through its phenomenal death and by its rise into unison with the Person of God, so that the liberated soul, the *brahmagyani* becomes a vehicle of God's Will

¹⁷ *The Mystics of Islam*, 1921.

in transcendent relationship as well as in the creative process of God. That is what is meant when the *Guru Granth* says that "a liberated soul is filled with zeal of cosmic welfare,"¹⁸ That is what is meant when in the *Dasamgranth* Guru Gobind Singh says that though he had "achieved complete and full unison with God,"¹⁹ and yet the Divine Command sent him back to earth to carry out God's purpose of "propagating good and destroying evil."²⁰ This ultimate concern of man according to Sikhism, the goal of establishing permanent unison with the Transcendent Reality, the Person of God *Akalpurkh*, clearly separates and distinguishes Sikhism, as a religion, apart from and independent of the Hindu and Buddhist spiritual tradition. The claim of Sikhism as an independent and autonomous world-religion is no naive or empty boast of a presumptuous claim, and it is a demonstrably valid and scientific assertion. There are no songs of *nirvana* in the Sikh doctrine and no hungering for peace of nothingness, utter death, emptiness and immobile little rest or *shantih* here.

"No scattering of personality or cleavage of individuality', *karvatra*, to achieve submergence into the sum-total of eternal substances, Brahmin, is the acceptable goal in Sikhism, nor unrealisable and ever unfulfilled human yearning for an utterly inaccessible God is the Sikh doctrine and Vision of religious quest; but an abiding unison of the nature of a love-duet between man and God, God the creator of the mortal man and the immortal *Brahman*, *atamattava*, both, is the teaching of Sikhism."²¹

VIII

"From this concept of Sikh summum bonum follows",

18. ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਪਰਉਪਕਾਰ ਉਮਾਹਾ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ 273)
19. ਦੈ ਤੇ ਏਕ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਗਯੋ ॥ (ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ)
20. ਧਰਮ ਚਲਾਵਨ ਸੰਤ ਉਬਾਰਨ ॥ ਦੁਸਟ ਸਭਨ ਕੋ ਮੂਲ ਉਪਾਰਨ ॥੪੩॥ (ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ)
21. ਕਰਵਤੁ ਭਲਾ ਨ ਕਰਵਟ ਤੇਰੀ ॥ ਲਾਗੁ ਗਲੇ ਸੁਨੁ ਬਿਨਤੀ ਮੇਰੀ ॥੧॥
ਹਉ ਵਾਰੀ ਮੁਖ ਫੇਰਿ ਪਿਆਰੇ ॥ ਕਰਵਟੁ ਦੇ ਮੋ ਕਉ ਕਾਹੇ ਕਉ ਮਾਰੇ ॥੧॥ਰਹਾਉ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ 484)

the new definition and content that Guru Amar Dass imparted to the fundamental concept of Absolute Reality, conceived as *sat-cit-anand* in Hindu spiritual tradition. True understanding and pursuit of this last component of Absolute Reality, *ananda*, has engaged Hindu mind throughout the ages conceiving of it as the seedless and featureless trance where the mind, in its utter unflickering emptiness, is, somehow, aware of this unsullied and altogether un-related nothingness and, in another way, relating it to pure bodily well-being *pushtimarag*, or the mystic thrill of sex experience. Our modern savant, Aurobindo, in his, *Life Divine* quotes *Taitreyaopanisad* with approval where it is said :

"Delight is existence, delight is the secret of creation, delight is the root of birth, is the cause of remaining in existence, delight is the end of birth and that in which creation ceases."

Modern British philosopher F.H. Bradley (1846-1924) in his *Appearance and Reality*, asserts that, "the perfect means the identity of idea and existence accompanied by pleasure."

Serious reflection, however, would show that these three components or characteristics of the Absolute Reality, no matter how intimately fused into one another to form a single whole, the last one of these components cannot conceivably exist without inhering in a 'person'. Though Being *sat*, can be independent of Consciousness, *cit*, and can exist in its own right, and though all may likewise exist without the surrogate of and direct alliance with *sat*, the Being, *ananda*, joy, bliss simply cannot exist except as deposit in the receptacle of consciousness which postulates a 'person'. Consciousness itself, the greatest mystery that man encounters, may be conscious of nothing else but itself but that leads to, what the philosophers call, "infinite" regression, implicating that the consciousness that is conscious of itself, must, in some definite sense, be other than "itself" of which it is conscious. Thus one can never grasp the starting point of this regression, unless a 'person' is postulated as the safe-deposit receptacle of this

consciousness *Ananda*, in order to be conceived at all, must be known by that which is other than *ananda*, a 'person', or else it makes no sense. *Ananda* must be known by a 'person', though *sat* and *cit* do not suffer from this incurable pre-requisite disability, for them to exist. It follows that, in the Mysticism of Infinity, there just can't be *ananda*, while in the Mysticism of Personality, all the three components of the Absolute Reality achieve viability and validity. It was this point which Guru Amar Dass elucidated with remarkable lucidity in his Revelation, *Anandu Ramkali*, in the Guru Granth.

"There has been much speculation about what *anandu* is, but the Word of the Guru now makes the matter clear. The *Anandu* is to be ever with God, the gift of His Grace and mark of His love.

God, in His Mercy, destroys the impurities and limitations of the human ego and bestows upon him the true knowledge and everlasting existence. The man when freed from the gravitational pull of the "world of corruption becomes weightless and purified with Truth, that is, the Word."²²

This is the *anandu* taught by Sikhism.

IX

The ancient and prestigious *chhadogyaopanisad* tells us that, "human mind is made up of food" that man consumes, *annamayamhi manah*. In the Hindu schemata of psychology, body, *shrir*, consciousness, *cita* and mind, *manah*, are the basic constituents of human personality. While the body is created and is perishable, the soul is imperishable. The *cita* is the result of past *karma* and mind is material, created by the food a man consumes. Thus, food acquires a central, soteriological

22. ਆਨੰਦੁ ਆਨੰਦੁ ਸਭੁ ਕੈ ਕਹੈ ਆਨੰਦੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਤੇ ਜਾਣਿਆ ॥
ਜਾਣਿਆ ਆਨੰਦੁ ਸਦਾ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਪਿਆਰਿਆ ॥
ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਿਲਵਿਖ ਕਟੇ ਗਿਆਨ ਅੰਜਨੁ ਸਾਰਿਆ ॥
ਅੰਦਰਹੁ ਜਿਨ ਕਾ ਮੋਹੁ ਭੁਟਾ ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਸਚੈ ਸਵਾਰਿਆ ॥
ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਏਹੁ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਹੈ ਆਨੰਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਜਾਣਿਆ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 917)

significance in human life, since the *karma* follows the mind in this life, and the deposit of *karma* in previous births determines the course of transmigration, the round of births and deaths, the curse of cyclic existence, a release, *mukti*, from which is the Hindu summum bonum. Thus the food that a man eats, acquires a peculiar centrality of significance in the Hindu scheme of things that constitute his ultimate concern, and those who misconceive Hindu scruples about food as grounded in his sense of superiority over others are altogether mistaken. For a Hindu, food is not primarily a matter of physical nourishment, as he views it as the primary source of psychic influences on his mind and thus a matter of extreme spiritual concern. What, how and where he eats is a matter of his private religion and not a matter of lack of feelings of human brotherliness in him. It is an unfortunate and thoroughly mistaken notion that Hindu commensality, the rule that food is to be eaten and received only in the presence of members of a certain group, is either disregard of others' human dignity or simple xenophobia, an irrational hatred for the foreigner. In this background the Hindu has classified "food" in accordance with the three Fundamental Modalities of All that Exists, the three *gunas* of the ancient Samkhya system, the *sattava*, the *rajas* and the *tamas*. The first represents harmony, clarity and equipoise; the second, dynamism and activity, and the third, lassitude and confusion. All Existence is modulated and regulated, in varying degrees, by these three *gunas*. The most desirable food, therefore, for a Hindu, is the *sattava*-based food. In *Bhagavadgita* the *sattava* foods are described as those that are sweet in taste, luscious and delicious to the palate and giving a feeling of easement when consumed. The Indian preference for *roshugullas*, *gulabjamins*, *halwa* and sweet *pulao* on our menu derives from this ancient Hindu insight into the relationship between food and mind and not because they are adjudged as health-foods or of weight-control caloric value. There are three blemishes as render a food unacceptable to a Hindu: *jatidosha*, uncivil and barbaric

qualities of the food itself, such as onion and garlic, *sthandosha*, public and open to the gaze of strangers while being consumed and lastly, *nammitadosha*, arising out of who cooked the food, who touched it and from where it came. It was in the context of these hoary traditions and notions that Guru Amar Dass set up his institution of free common kitchen, the *langar*, now deemed as a necessary adjunct of every sizable Sikh gurdwara. The Guru made partaking of food in his *langar* as a prerequisite condition for seeking his audience and coming to his presence. The king and the prince, the rich and the pauper, the high caste and the low caste, the Hindu and the Muslim, all had to, and as the chroniclers tell us, did comply willingly with this requirement. A Hindu common kitchen wherein all must eat together is simply unthinkable, while there did exist, in medieval India, the institution of free and common kitchens maintained by Muslim sufi darveshas and holy men. It is on records²³ that Khwaja Nizamuddin Aulia, following the precedent of his spiritual master, Sheikh Farid Shakaraganj, always insisted on a visitor to take food first in his kitchen and then come to his presence. The Aulia often used to quote a *hadith* that says that, "he who paid a visit to a living person but took no food there, in fact, visited a dead man." But the institution of Sikh *langar* which Guru Amar Dass perpetuated is distinct and distinguishable in principle and objectives from this Muslim practice of a free kitchen. In three respects the institution of the Sikh *langar* is altogether a novel and revolutionary phenomenon in the history and climate of India: (1) The essence of the Sikh *langar* is not essentially hospitality such as has made Muslim tradition of hospitality famous throughout the world and such as characteristically distinguishes the Muslim human type from most other races and communities of the world. In the Sultanate period in Delhi, it is recorded that, noted Muslim divine used daily to walk through the streets of the town chanting "O Muslims, be

23. *Favaid-ul-fuad*.

true Muslims; sell away all your possessions to practice generous hospitality"²⁴ In the case of the Sikh *langar* the food offered is essentially a trans-substantiated host, symbolising Sikh doctrine of universal brotherhood of man (2) The Sikh doctrine relates 'food', as such, to nutrition and health, regarding it as a gift from God and disassociates it from the Hindu view of food as the core of psychic life and religious practices (3) The Sikh doctrine compresses the concept of food-blemishes to just one comprehensive blemish, that the food eaten must be clean, health-promoting and obtained through just and fair means. All these revolutionary ideas Guru Amar Dass propagated and integrated to the Sikh way of life.

X

'Sati' literally means 'one wedded to truth' and its accepted meaning is 'a virtuous wife'. From times immemorial, in our country, it has been recognised as the true test of a sati that she cremates her living body along with that of her dead husband. The premier and ancient *Brahmapurana* lays it down as "*the highest duty of the woman to immolate herself after her husband, since this is commanded by the Veda as a path greatly reputed in all the worlds.*"²⁵ The Greek and the Muslim invaders into India, during the last 24 centuries have been amazed and awe struck with this custom of sati and have viewed it both as a high water mark of human faith and fidelity and as an ignoble custom and dreadful barbarity. Diodorus Siculus, the Greek writer of the 2nd century B.C. cynically refers to this custom as "an insurance against the untimely death of husbands", insinuating it as a common practice in ancient Indian for men to be poisoned by their women-folk. The sensitive Muslims saw in sati a stunning example of undying human love and unconquerable human faith: "Where else in the world, except in the case of a Hindu

24. ai mussalman mussalmani kuned.

khaneh bifiroshed-o mehmani kuned.

25. satrinamyam parodharam yadbharatu anuvesnam,
vede ca vihito margah sarva lokeshu pujitah-80, 75.

woman can you find such sublimity of love which expresses itself by dying with the dead !²⁶ The foreign rulers in India, viewing the custom, generally, as inhuman and repugnant to conscience have tried to discourage or suppress it through coercive power of the state: The Portuguese, in the first half of the 16th century, made *sati* illegal in Goa. Emperor Akbar disapproved of it in the Institutes of his new-fangled religion, *din-e-ilahi* but promulgated no state-Law to forbid it. Jehangir, in his early rule, found new converts to Islam practising *sati* in the Himalayan foothills and sternly forbade it. Shah Jehan made it illegal for *sati* to be performed near Muslim cemeteries. Aurangzeb, in 1664 A.D., issued an edict forbidding *sati* throughout his dominions but his Government found itself powerless to enforce it. Lord William Bentick, by Madras Regulation 1 of 1829, declared *sati* illegal in Bengal and punishable by criminal courts. *Sati* continued in Punjab upto its annexation of the British Empire in 1849. But such is the pull and thrill of the mystique of *sati* to the Hindu mind that the practice has staged a nostalgic comeback here and there, after the British left India in 1947. Guru Amar Dass made a seminal pronouncement on the subject of *sati* by deepening its spiritual significance and annulling its draconic requirement of cremation of the living wife. His relevant revelation in the *Guru Granth* declares :

“A virtuous wife is not one who burns
Herself alive with her dead husband.
She, indeed, would be a *sati* who dies through
Shock of separation. But, says Nanak, a
True *sati* is she who bears the shock of
Separation with courage and lives her natural
Span of life in a disciplined, dignified and virtuous
manner.”²⁷

26. cun zane hindu kase dar ashqi diwana nist,
sokhtan bar shama-i-murdeh kare har parvanch nist.

27. ਸਤੀਆ ਏਹਿ ਨ ਆਖੀਅਨਿ ਜੋ ਮਝਿਆ ਲਗਿ ਜਲੰਨੁ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਜਿ ਬਿਰਹੇ ਚੋਟ ਮਰੰਨੁ ॥੧॥
ਭੀ ਸੋ ਸਤੀਆ ਜਾਣੀਅਨਿ ਸੀਲ ਸੋਭਿ ਰਹੰਨੁ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 787)

This revelation of the Guru firstly, deprecates *sati* through cremation of the living wife and secondly, approves of an enlightened observation in the classical Sanskrit text, *Bhartriharinirvedam*, of Harihar Upadhyaya (10.c.), Wherein queen Bhanumati tells her husband Bhartrihari that for a truly virtuous wife it is unnecessary to mount a funeral pyre alive, and subsequently she proves it by dying of shock on hearing of the false news of the death of her husband. Thirdly, the Guru explains the Sikh doctrine on *sati* by upholding the high Hindu idealism implicit in *sati*, and by deepening and interiorising its meaning which cleans the ideal of all its objectionable features relating to burning of the living wife. Never before or since in history has a lofty human ideal, thus been so firmly upheld and repudiated simultaneously.

XI

The question of social status of woman and her political rights is distinct and distinguishable from her capacity and right to full religious experience and to administer religion's ecclesiastical and church affairs. The one concerns social and political customs and prejudices and the other the innate capability of the human female to control and guide institutions and organisations of religion. While in almost all the higher world-religions, the capacity of woman to participate in the highest levels of religious experience is conceded, her innate capacity to guide and control institutions of religion is not so conceded. The reason for this denial is stated not as custom, tradition or political exigency, but her psychological structure and innate disability arising out of the 'female-principle' of the Creation. "Under no circumstances must a woman be permitted to hold a position of authority over others or control of herself", *na satriyam scantantrayam arahati*²⁸ is the draconian rule laid down by Hindu law-givers. Gautam, the Buddha bemoaned before his confidential secretary, Ananda :

28. *Manusmriti, Baudhayansmriti, Gautamsmriti.*

"If women had not received permission to
Enter the Buddhist Order, the good
Religion would have lasted for a thousand years,
But now, O, Ananda, because of woman entrants,
It will decay and wither after five hundred years."²⁹

The prestigious Bayadavi, in his authoritative commentary on the Koran says that,

"Allah has preferred men to women in the matter of mental ability: and their power for performance of duties."³⁰

Sheikh Mohammad Hussain Makhloof, the Mufti of Egypt, in a *fatwa* (1952) has declared that,

"There is no authority in Islamic social system
For giving the women the right to vote
And to be elected to Parliament owing
To their inherently unstable nature
On the authority of Islamic law."

In the synagogue the women are inactive participants in the worship-service and sit veiled on the women's side usually separated from the rest by an opaque lattice. Saint Paul carried over the rule of the synagogue into the Christian congregation that, women should keep silence in the Churches. Today, this rule is still the basis of the refusal to ordain women as priest in the Roman Catholic Church in startling contrast to these age-old and almost universal convictions and practices of mankind, Guru Amar Dass, over four hundred years ago appointed and ordained a large number of women preachers under the nomenclature of 'the Sacred Stools', *pirhian*, and it is on record that, at least one woman was *ordained* and appointed as a Sikh bishop, Mathura Devi wife of Murari. This is a truly remarkable phenomenon in the history of World-religions and marks a new insight into and makes a most liberal estimation of the innate capacities of woman in relation to the highest spheres of human activity, the religion.

29. *Mahaparinib bansutta*.

30. *Anwar-ul-tanzil*.

XII

How is 'revelation' different from literature and, is literary craftsmanship integral to and peculiar to each one of them, are questions that have occupied the subtlest and loftiest human minds throughout the history of religion. The cognoscenti now generally appreciate the distinction between 'the revelation' and 'literature'. Literature is of secular and rational origin while revelation is of divine inspiration. Literature is product of conflict within the writer himself while revelation, by an external supra-human agency. Literature may be judged by its quality and effect while revelation is characterised by its autonomous validity, *svatesiddha* as the Hindus say. Guru Amar Dass makes most unambiguous pronouncement on the subject.

"There is no utterly trustworthy guidance for man,
Except the Divine revelation. Mere literature is infected
With uncertainty and error for, its origin is no better
Than human, ever prone to misknowing."³¹

XIII

In the holy Koran is staked the claim that it is inimitable, because it is revelation and not the creation of human mind. "If the mankind and the *jinn* gathered together to produce the like of this Koran, they could not produce the like thereof even if they should help one another" (17:89).

On the basis of this many theological works have been written on the subject of 'inimitability of Koran, *Ijaz-i-quran*. The claim is based on the holy book's literary craftsmanship, its rhyming prose, the principle of which has not yet been properly analysed. T.S. Eliot (1888-1965), the doyen of modern English literature, has introduced a literary craftsmanship in English poetry which has no precedent in English or other world-literatures. It has been given the name of 'Cyclic

31. ਬਾਣੀ ਤ ਕਚੀ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਹੋਰ ਕਚੀ ਬਾਣੀ ॥
ਕਹਦੇ ਕਚੇ ਸੁਣਦੇ ਕਚੇ ਕਚੀ ਆਖਿ ਵਖਾਣੀ ॥

Technique in Poetry'. In this technique the problem is stated but is not resolved and ended. There is a halt and a recovery and a recurring branching off to come back to the topic by another road and from another angle. Here is an example.

And, indeed, there will be time
 For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,
 Rubbing its back on the window pane!
 There will be time, there will be time,
 To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet
 There will be time to murder and create
 And time for all the works and days of hands,
 That lift and drop a question in your plate.

It is T.S. Eliot too who has conspicuously broadened the base of literature into theology and philosophy. Both of these features of Eliot's poetry appear to have been curiously forestalled in the revelations of Guru Amar Dass in the *Guru Granth*.

ਭਗਤਾ ਕੀ ਚਾਲ ਨਿਰਾਲੀ ॥
 ਚਾਲਾ ਨਿਰਾਲੀ ਭਗਤਾਹ ਕੇਰੀ ਬਿਖਮ ਮਾਰਗਿ ਚਲਣਾ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੮).

ਏਹੁ ਸੋਹਿਲਾ ਸਬਦੁ ਸੁਹਾਵਾ ॥
 ਸਬਦੋ ਸੁਹਾਵਾ ਸਦਾ ਸੋਹਿਲਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ ॥

.....
 ਜੀਅਹੁ ਮੈਲੇ ਬਾਹਰਹੁ ਨਿਰਮਲ ॥
 ਬਾਹਰਹੁ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਜੀਅਹੁ ਤ ਮੈਲੇ ਤਿਨੀ ਜਨਮੁ ਜੂਐ ਹਾਰਿਆ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੯)

.....
 ਜੇ ਕੋ ਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਤੀ ਸਨਮੁਖੁ ਹੋਵੈ ॥
 ਹੋਵੈ ਤ ਸਨਮੁਖੁ ਸਿਖੁ ਕੋਈ ਜੀਅਹੁ ਰਹੈ ਗੁਰ ਨਾਲੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੯)

Again, when Eliot, in his Four Quartets, speaks of "intersection of the Timelessness with Time", is he trying to say and convey what Guru Amar Dass reveals in his *Anandu Ramkali*;

e' man meria tu sada rahu hari nale?
 ਏ ਮਨ ਮੇਰਿਆ ਤੂ ਸਦਾ ਰਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਲੇ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੭)
 'O my mind remain ever with God'.

ESSENTIALS OF SIKHISM

GENERAL

Religion deals essentially with three subjects of the nature of reality, the nature of man and its relation to this reality, and lastly, with the way to reach this reality. The first two subjects belong to philosophy proper and it is the third subject which brings the other two also into the domain of religion. As long as religion merely defines the nature of reality and seeks to lay down the true values of human activity, it is no more than philosophy and ethics, but when it seeks and promises to help human soul to take these truths to heart and to put them into action with the object of resolving the problem of suffering, which is inherent in the innermost core of man, the self-consciousness, then it becomes religion proper. Man can possibly keep his mind away from the intellectual problems of the mystery of universe, the nature of his own self and that of the world around him and the nature of the relationship that binds both, but he cannot help yearning and suffering. As Pascal has said, "Man is the only wretched creature that there is", and "a religion which did not whole-heartedly tackle this problem would ring hollow." In this sense, Buddhism was eminently right when it declared that the basic problem, demanding resolution of religion is "sā dukhan", i.e., that all individuated conscious existence entails suffering, which means that suffering inheres in the very nature of the human individuality.

Sikhism is essentially a Religion of the Way, i.e., something that must be lived and experienced rather than

something which may be intellectually grasped and comprehended. True, there can be no practice without the doctrine. Sikhism, therefore, has its doctrines, its views of reality, its view of the nature of man, and their interrelationship, but it, lays primary stress on the practice, the discipline, "the way which leads to the cessation of suffering", as Gautam, the Buddha, had formulated it.

A careful reading and understanding of the contents of the Sikh scripture shows that the religion of Sikhism has three postulates implicit in its teachings. One, that there is no essential duality between the spirit and the matter.¹ Two, that man alone has the capacity to enter into conscious participation in the process of evolution, which further implicates that the process of evolution, as understood by the modern man, has come to a dead-end and it, therefore, must be rescued by the conscious effort of man who alone is capable now of furthering this process.² Three, that when man reaches the highest goal of evolution, namely, the vision of God, he must not be absorbed back into God of voidness, but must remain earth-conscious so as to transform this mundane world into a higher and spiritual mode of existence. *Brahmgyani paropkar omaha*.³

The first of these propositions is a postulate of philosophy, though in the context of philosophic speculations of the world, it is startling enough. The view taken by Sikhism on this point is that the spirit and the matter are not antagonistic to each other, the one subtle, the other gross, and that the core of the human nature, which is self-conscious, and the physical nature, are accountable ultimately in terms of the subtle. The mathematico-physical aspect of the universe is as real as its subtle aspect is, though to a mode of consciousness which is pin-pointed and individuated, they appear to be poles apart. A true comprehension, however, which results from the

1. Sargun ap, nirgnu bhi ohi, — Sukhmani, V.

2. Kai janam bhaie kit patanga... Mil jagdis, milan ki baria, Gauri, V.

3. Sukhmani, V.

religious discipline of sublimating and integrating the human faculties, removes this basic duality between the mind and the matter. "When I say truly, I knew that all was primeval Nanak: *the subtle and the gross are in fact identical.*"⁴ This assertion is repeated in the Sikh scripture again and again in exegesis of the basic formula of Sikhism given as the opening line of the Sikh scripture in which it is postulated that,

"The Primary is true, the pre-Temporal is true, the Phenomena is true, and also the yet-to-be-evolved is true."⁵

This view of reality, which Sikhism postulates, has far-reaching implications, both in respect of the traditional Hindu philosophy, and the problem of the true conduct for man. Firstly, it, in essence, repudiates the basic concept of Hindu thought embodied in the doctrine of maya, which is postulated as the illusory power which createth appearances and ignorance. True, the subtle Hindu mind characterises it as *anirvachniya*, "unsayable whether is, or is not", "real, yet not-real", but it definitely is a veiling obscuring power of nature, and an agent of error and illusion, accountable for the manifestation of all phenomena. In Sikhism, the term maya is retained, but it is interpreted otherwise so as to make it not a category of existence, but a characteristic of a stage and plane in the involution of the spirit. The result of this re-interpretation is replete with tremendous consequences for the practical outlook of man. The world of phenomena is no longer a dream and a phantasmagoria in the minds of the gods, to be bypassed and shunned. It is as real, in fact, as the Ultimate Reality, but the preceiving human mind is beset with limitations that must be transcended and cut asunder before it can be seen thus it is this that made it possible for Sikhism to lay down," that the highest religious discipline must be practised while remaining active in the socio-political context,

4. *Ibid.*

5. Japu, 1.

and not by giving up and renouncing the worldly life. It is this which has given the Sikh mind a sense of urgency, and imparted to it a genuine strain of extroversion which the Western mind has achieved only through adopting basically different postulates, such as, that this one life on earth is the only life a soul may look forward to till the end of time, and that the essence of the real is its characteristic of being the object of sensory-motor perception. It is the peculiar virtue of Sikhism that while it retains the primacy of the spirit over the matter. It prevents human life degenerating into the purely secular, utilitarian and expedient modes of activity. It is a further virtue of this postulate of Sikh religion that it lends the necessary sense of urgency to the mind of man⁶ and imparts to it an extrovert motivation in so far as it is essential to retain them for human welfare, material prosperity and spiritual advancement of this earth.

The second postulate inherent in the teachings of Sikhism is that the blind urge of evolution, after reaching the point of creating the self-conscious man, has come to a dead-end and, by itself now, it is incapable of making any further progress, unless the self-consciousness, in which is grounded the will of man, now takes a consciously guided and directed part to goad the evolutionary urge and guide it. "Hail the Guru, for, he teaches and aids the ascent of man over himself."⁷ This line of thought, in various forms, runs throughout the voluminous Sikh scripture, and it is legitimate to say that the concept of the 'superman', which agitated the mind of Nietzsche during the 19th century in Europe, and from whom the modern Indian thinker, Aurobindo Ghose, has taken his cue, is first of all and truly adumbrated in the Sikh scripture; and that the conscious effort of man alone is at this stage, capable of furthering the process of evolution that has gone so far to make and shape the material and human world, is now more or less accepted by the thinking modern minds.

6. Kal Karanta abhi kar - Sloku, Kabir.

7. Var Asa, 1.

But by far the most startling postulate of Sikhism is that true end of man is not such a vision of God which culminates in re-absorption of the individual into the absolute reality, but the emergence of a race of God-conscious men, who remain earth-aware and thus operate in the mundane world of the phenomena, with the object of transforming and spiritualising it into a higher and more abundant plane of existence. "The God-conscious man is animated with an intense desire to do good in this world."⁸ In the past, the aim of the highest religious discipline was taken and accepted as the attainment of identity with or propinquity to God. It was not thought in terms of utilising the God-consciousness for transforming and spiritualising the life on earth, and the humanity. It is this revolutionary postulate of Sikhism which is the true prototype of the sophisticated philosophy of the modern Hindu sage, Aurobindo Ghose, though there is no concrete evidence to suggest that he is directly indebted to the Sikh thought. Those however, who know how basic and revolutionary postulates of this kind are capable of influencing men and minds, far separated by distance and time from the original epiphany of the doctrine, may perceive no difficulty in seeing the connection between the two. In this connection, it is interesting to recall that not long ago, when Ramakrishana Paramhansa, the modern Hindu savant, was at his most critical stage of theophanic development, it was a Sikh ascetic, Udasi Totapuri, who imparted to the Paramhansa the Sikh esoteric instruction efficacious for removing impediments on the spiritual path, and that is why the most Illustrious *chela* of the Paramhansa, Swami Vivekananda, so often uttered and introduced into his writings, the Sikh mystic formula, *Waheguru*. Again the Maratha upsurge of the 18th century, the pride and symbol of the political consciousness and self-respect of the modern Hindu nationalism, is admitted as having been directly inspired and nourished by the teachings of Ram Das Samarth,

8. Gauri Sukhmani, V.

the spiritual guide of the great Shiva Ji, and it is a true, though obscure, fact of history that Ram Das Samarth is directly indebted to the Sikh teachings as imparted to him when he met the Sixth Nanak, Guru Hargobind, in Kashmir, in 1634. As the Gurmukhi manuscript (Khalsa College Library, Amritsar 1780 Circa), *Pothi Punjab Sakhian* accounts, the Guru taught the Maratha saint that the essence of Sikhism is to be an ascetic within and secular without, for Guru Nanak taught mankind to transcend the little ego and the appearances and not to renounce the World, whereupon the Maratha saint exclaimed "This appeals to my mind."⁹ The inspirer and preceptor of the founder of the Arya Samaj, Vrijanand, a high-caste Brahmin, native of Kartarpur in the Punjab, had before settling down at Benaras as a Veda learned man, imbibed the Sikh declaration that "unless the mankind pays heed to that which is true essence of all Veda namely doctrine of the Name, they shall remain confused and misdirected."¹⁰ Be that as it may, the effects of the seminal ideas of Sikhism can be shown to have moulded and shaped the entire history of modern India.

What is the discipline and the practice which Sikhism recommends as necessary and efficacious for attaining this God-consciousness, and for yoking it to the evolutionary urge for transformation of life and humanity on this earth, and on the plane of mundane existence ? It is the doctrine and practice of the Name. "In the age through which humanity is passing now, no other practice but that of the name is efficacious. Therefore, practice the discipline of Name."¹¹ This message is repeated again and again in the Sikh scripture. "O, my soul, there is no help but in the Name; other ways and practices are not so sure."¹²

Now, what is this 'discipline of the Name', which

9. Yeh Hamare Man Bhawti Hain.

10. Ramkali, Anand, III.

11. Asa, I.

12. Gauri, V.

Sikhism teaches as the essence of the religion for mankind in the present age ?

In the history of religion, broadly speaking, five paths have been recognised as efficacious for leading to liberation, i.e. for achievement of the summum bonum of religion: (1) disinterested action, known as the *Karmayoga* in Hindu religious thought; (2) devotion, known as *bhakti*; (3) gnosis, the *Gyan*; (4) the ritual, known as *yajna*; and (5) asceticism, maceration or *tapa*. This fifth and the last path to liberation is a typical Indian contribution to the history of religious practices. All the other four have been, more or less, universally accepted in some form or other, with varying degrees of stress on each as valid paths to liberation. In the Sikh scripture, the first three are variously mentioned and subsumed under the inclusive title, 'the discipline of the Name.' No logically systematic account of the theory or practice of the Name is given in the Sikh scripture, however, for the idiom of the writings itself forbids such an approach, but throughout its voluminous pages it is stressed again and again with a wealth of metaphor and imagery, illustrative material and exposition, that at the present stage of mankind the discipline of the Name is the only suitable and efficacious practice for leading to the vision of God and for achieving the unitive experience of the Numenon. The discipline of *Bhakti* and discipline of *Karma*, the dis-interested works, is also mentioned variously, commended and praised but throughout it is tacitly assumed that it is a part and parcel of the generic discipline, "The practice of the Name." The limitation and the sickness in the soul of man can be removed only by mercerizing it with the chemical of the Name.¹³ The vision of God is not easier to have by any other endeavour than that of the Name and man engages in this effort only by good fortune, for all the other disciplines and practices pale into insignificance before the practice of the Name.¹⁴ It is asserted

13. Japu, I.

14. Gauri Sukhmani, V.

that the true knowledge is a fruit of the practice of the Name¹⁵ and that devotion, *Bhakti*, is a corollary of the discipline of the Name.¹⁶ It is further said that disinterested action, the practice of *Karmayoga*, is a natural disposition and propensity of the man in whom the discipline of the Name is ripened. *Prabhu kau simarahi se parupkari*.¹⁷

It is clear, therefore, that Sikhism teaches a religious discipline which is in essence a practice which includes the techniques of yoga, the psychological and spiritual integration, the technique of *bhakti*, the supreme training of the emotions in the service of one supreme end, and a socio-politically active life motivated not by the little ego of the individual, but by an individual self which is yoked to the universal self.

The technique of yoga has aroused a great deal of interest in the West and in the whole of the modern world during the recent years, but mostly as a technique for achieving mental poise and physical health, though this is not the true purpose of the science of yoga as originally conceived. The concept of Yoga, though, not the term, is as old as the Rig Veda itself. That the Vedic material is complex is recognised in the Nirukta itself which takes account of several methods of its exegesis. In recent times, particularly by Western scholars of archaeology, it has been suggested that Vedic material is primarily historical events transmuted into myth. It is said by others that it consists of poetic exordium to the Brahminic ritual. There is then a theory, recently revived by Sri Aurobindo Ghose, that the Veda is a vast piece of symbolism representing the passions of the soul and its striving for highest spiritual realms, a concept which he himself has adopted as the prototype of his great poem, the *Savitri*. Again, Bergaigne suggested the theory that all mythological portrayals in the Veda are variants of the sacred fire and the sacrificial

15. Sukhmani, V.

16. Gauri : Thitti, V.

17. Sukhmani, V.

liquor the *Soma*.¹⁸ Whatever may be said about this last as a general theory of interpretation of the Vedas, it has the merit of suggesting a method which appears to be plausible, for, obscure Vedic texts assume some kind of coherence in general if in them we seek an attempt at portraying correspondences between the world of men, the performers of the *yajna*, and the immaterial ethereal world of the gods, in short, the microcosm and the macrocosm. The primary function of the *rishis* the revealers and preservers of the Veda, was to ensure the ordered functioning of the mundane world, and of the religious ritual, by reproducing the succession of cosmic events in their ritual and in the imagery which that ritual embodies, and this is the true meaning that the Vedic ritual signified. The term *rita*, the basic concept of Vedic imagery, is a designation of the cosmic order which sustains the human order, the social ethics and the social coherency. Terms such as *dharnan*, *kratu*, have a two-fold significance according to whether they refer to men or the gods, to the plane of the *adhyatmam* or the *adhidaivatam*, as the *Upanishads* point out. Thus understood, the *Veda* portrays the cosmic magical synthesis, symbolically expressed. The cosmic order is conceived as a *vast yajna*, the prototype of *yajna* which the man must perform so as to ensure the integration of the two. Thus, Vedism is already a form of collective, communist yoga in which the gods and men both play their parts as witnesses and participants. It is this strain of thought which accounts for the yearning of the Hindu mind that constantly seeks hidden correspondences between things which belong to entirely different conceptual systems. The science and the technique of yoga, as it has been developed in India for thousands of years, is thus as old as the Hindu thought itself. The term comes from the Sanskrit root *yuj*, which means to yoke or join together. As the specific science of spiritual discipline, it is intended to signify the union of the individual self with the

18. A. Bergaigne, *La religion Vedique*, 3 Vols, Paris, 1878.

universal self, the vision of God or the absorption into God. As an art, the technique of yoga has been used, since the beginning of Hindu historical times, as the archaeological discoveries recently made in the Indus valley Mohenjodaro show, where a big tank surrounded by unventilated cubicles, designed to ensure deoxygenation calculated to alter body chemistry facilitative of introversion has been unearthed, lending support to the speculation that already in the millennia before the dawn of the Christian Era, the art and practice of yoga was well-developed and well-established. Its techniques and teachings have been accumulated through a continuous stream of adepts who have handed them down from generation to generation. Patanjali, a Hindu savant of the 4th century B.C., is the author of the text *Yogasutra*, which is now the most ancient text extant on the science of yoga, though its opening *sutra* says, "Now, a revised text of yoga", which makes it clear that this text is, by no means, the first of its kind. The philosophical basis of this system of yoga, as expounded by Patanjali, is the *Sankhya* which teaches that the world order is risen and is an expansion of the highest kind of intelligence, the *Mahat*; that there is no part without an assignable function, a value, a purpose; that there is always an exact selection of means for the production of definite ends; that there is never a random aggregation of events; that there is order, regulation and system. It postulates two ultimate realities, the spirit and the matter, the *purusha* and the *prakriti*, to account for all experience, as logical principles out of which all things evolve. The fundamental tenet of the *Sankhya* is that creation is impossible, for something cannot come out of nothing, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, and that the real movement, therefore, only consists of modification. This is the central doctrine of the *Sankhya*, and is called, *satkarya vada*, (*Sankhya Karika*, 9) and its whole system evolves from this as its logical ground. The *Sankhya* divides this process of cosmic modification into 25 categories of mind and matter, and shows how the

whole phenomena has evolved out of these two sources in accordance with these categories. The philosophy of orthodox yoga postulates that what is true of this macrocosm is also true of the human microcosm and that, as the individual soul has involuted, through a set process, out of the universal Spirit, it can, by the reverse process, evolve into the universal spirit. The yoga assumes that the individual soul is the part and parcel of the universal substance, but so involved in the context of time and space as to have lost all his own and original position, to absolve him from the clutches of matter and to return to the essence from which he came, and thus to abstract him from every aspect of time and space.

Since Sikhism abolishes the duality of mind and matter, it, by implication, refuses to base the philosophy of its discipline of the Name on the orthodox categories of the *Sankhya*. The Sikh doctrine of the Name does not assume the traditional cosmological theory as set forth in the *Sankhya* system, but it does assert that the basic sickness of the human soul arises out of its individuation, its involution and descent from the universal Spirit, and that the cure and health lies in a process of evolution towards its primal source, which is God.¹⁹ For this, it recommends a psychological technique, the first step and ingredient of which is the mechanical repetition of the Name of God accompanied by a constant and unceasing effort to empty the individual mind of all its sensory and ideational contents, conscious as well as sub-conscious.²⁰ Since Sikhism recommends that religion must be lived and practised in the socio-political context, it has modelled this practice of the yoga of the Name so as to make it possible and practicable for a person to pursue this discipline simultaneously while engaged in earning honest livelihood. The complicated technique of yoga, as laid down in the text of Patanjali, and

19. Nijghar mahil pavaho sukh sahije. —Gauri, V.

20. "Ram, Ram, Sabhko kahai, Kahiai, Ram na hoe, Gurparsadi Ram man vasai, tan phal pavai koe." —Gujri, III.

the philosophical concepts by which it is validated, both go together and the earning of livelihood and this practice of the yoga, as it is explicitly laid down, cannot go together. In Sikhism, this predicament has been transcended by evolving a technique which is at once practicable and efficacious. This practice of the Name is mechanical to start with, but has its dynamic adjuncts, without which it cannot succeed. The first adjunct is the ethical life. The Sikh scripture lays constant stress on it that unless a man leads an ethical life, he cannot come nigh unto God, although Sikhism does not confuse the ethical commandment and value with the religious experience and value as such. A Sikh, engaged in the discipline of Name, himself must lead a life of the highest ethical purity, in word, thought and deed, every faltering from this path of rectitude constitutes a stumbling block in the path of his ultimate realisation of God. "A man of religion must be wholly motivated by ethical rules of conducts."²¹ He is bidden to rely upon prayer and the company of holy men to support and sustain him in his life of ethical rectitude. As he progresses in the path of spiritual realisation, he must deem it as his duty to persuade and help others to tread the same path through socio-political activity which must be progressively purified of all taints of selfishness. This is the doctrine of *sewa* of Sikhism, without which, the Sikhism declares, the practice of Name does not fructify.

It is further laid down in the Sikh scripture that the discipline of *Naam* must be constantly vitalised by *bhakti*, devotion of God. "Increase your devotion of God in an ever-ascending measure so that your mind may be wholly purified."²² The word *bhakt*, has the literal meaning of 'well-joined.' The word, *bhakt* occurs in the *Svetasvetara*, the ancient Hindu text, which Otto Schrader in his *Der yinduismus Tubingen*, (1930, p.1) calls, "the gateway to Hinduism",

21. Sukhmani, V. 4-24.

22. Sukhmani, V.

although the earlier, Panini, in his *Grammar* also appears to refer to it (IViii.95-98). It was the *bhakti* principle which brought about the transition from the neuter to the personal principle in Hindu religious speculation. Since *bhakti* is 'Joining with' or 'participation' in God, it presupposes an object distinct from the subject. A purely monistic environment, such as the Sikh doctrine projects, is not a very fertile ground for *bhakti*. *Bhakti*, therefore, has always been better adapted to a Vaishnavite background wherein a personal God is postulated as assuming human and sub-human forms in the phenomenal world. The orthodox Hindu theory of *bhakti* is that, a God without attributes is inaccessible, and that, there must be an intercessor. Since Hinduism has no founder or prophet God incarnate, the 'Word made flesh', as the Christians say, this intermediary must be one of the human or sub-human forms of Vishnu, which he has assumed in various time-cycles of the creation. This is the basic doctrine of Hindu *bhakti*, though gradually it has acquired many shades of secondary meanings. Since Sikhism does not countenance *avtarvad*, the doctrine of incarnation of gods of the God, it uses the term *bhakti*, in its pristine sense of canalizing and sublimating the whole emotive energy of the individual to sustain the continuous yearning for a vision of God.²³ This form of *bhakti*, the Sikh scripture declares, is necessary adjunct of the discipline of Name :

*Gur man mario kar sanjog, ahinis ravai bhagati jog.*²⁴

ਗੁਰਿ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਰਿਓ ਕਰਿ ਸੰਜੋਗੁ ॥ ਅਹਿਨਿਸਿ ਰਾਵੈ ਭਗਤਿ ਜੋਗੁ ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ 1170)

The last adjunct of the discipline, of Name, the Sikh scripture says is the intuitive understanding of the philosophical truths which underline the world of phenomena.

This is the true knowledge, the gnosis, and the Sikh scripture commends that a Sikh must always strive by study, by discussion, by meditation and by every mental effort, to

23. *Majh*, Astpadi, III.

24. *Basant*, I.

acquire an intellectual and intuitive understanding of the scientific and philosophic truths.²⁵

This, in short outline, is the discipline of the Name which Sikhism teaches as the path to the realisation of God, and, broadly speaking, it consists of a synthesis of the three well-known paths to liberation recognised in the religions of mankind, namely, the path of disinterested action, the path of devotion and the path of knowledge, all subsumed under and practised as adjuncts to the grand discipline of the psychological technique of the *Namayoga*. The modern Hindu thinker, Aurobindo Ghose, in his own way, has tried to expound something similar under the title of *Integral Yoga*, though it is definitely something less, but expressed in a more sophisticated and modern literary style.

It is, therefore, this discipline of the Name through which Sikhism seeks not only to ensure continuous renewal but a firm conservancy of the fundamental traditions of the great religions of mankind and, in addition, it there by seeks to discover new experiences so as to apply them for the purpose of a new integration of human personality, such as would transform the man and his destiny on this earth.

Out of the five paths to liberation, generally followed by mankind the two, namely, the ritual and the maceration, have not been recommended and approved of by Sikhism, for obvious reasons. The ritual, in its original essence, is magic and its nature and function is different from that of true religions conceived by Sikhism. Magic seeks to control powers of nature directly through the force of spells and enchantments, while religion recognises existence of spiritual beings external to man and the world, and employs persuasive methods of sacrifice and prayer to procure their aid. Magic is coercive and dictatorial in approach, while the other is persuasive. Magic depends upon the way in which certain things are said and done for a particular purpose by those who possess the

25. Man karhala vadbhagia, tu gian ratan samal. —Gauri, Astpadi, IV.

necessary technique and the power to put the supernatural forces into effect, while religion is personal and supplicatory. It is for this reason that the path of the ritual and the *yajna* has been discountenanced by Sikhism.

Asceticism and maceration have been likewise disowned as desirable paths to liberation,²⁶ for these practices necessarily implicate withdrawal.

From socio-political activity, and Sikhism firmly discourages such a withdrawal in view of its basic doctrines which envisaged an ultimate transformation of the man and his destiny on this mundane earth as the fruit of the religion. A true religious man, therefore, must not macerate and 'burn away' his physical frame through excessive *tapas*, but must keep it in disciplined health. Nanak says, "the proper course for man is to seek communion with God by keeping his corporeal frame disciplined and fit."²⁷

The order of the Khalsa, which the tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh founded, must be viewed in the background of these doctrines of Sikhism, as intended to be a body of men who not only practise the essential spiritual discipline of Sikhism, in the sense explained above, but who are also pledged to ensure, by every legitimate means, the coming into existence, the expansion, and the preservation of a world society, vitalised continuously by the affiliation of the truths of religion, which religion is affluence of all the best traditions of mankind and which religion sustains a world culture in which all traditions of all races of mankind, such as are consistent with the spiritual dignity and the spiritual goal of man, can participate on equal terms.

THE SIKH THOUGHT

The basic problems of Sikh thought are naturally the same as those of other world religions, and as may be

26. *Yajna*, hom, punn, tap, puja, dehi dukhi nit dukh sahai - Bhairav, I.

27. Gujri, I.

expected, their treatment by Sikhism is, in the main, on the lines of the Hindu and Buddhist speculative thought. Wherever Sikhism differs or departs from these lines of thought, it does so, as a rule, not by introducing new terms or concepts, but by underlining an already familiar concept or by amplifying or interpreting it otherwise. This is, as it should be, for, thus alone it is possible to effect a genuine new advance or expansion in the cultural and religious horizon of mankind and it is thus that all great cultures and civilizations have emerged and developed.

The Universe: We have already said that, in Sikh thought, the final duality between the matter and the spirit is denied; the basic Sikh thought is strictly monistic. "From one the many emanate and finally into the one the many submerge."²⁸ All that exists, whether in the form of phenomena, appearances, or as numenon and reality is, in ultimate comprehension, the Spirit and the mind. The individual mind, the numerous forms of life, and the inanimate matter are all Spirit in different modes. Out of the own initiative of the Spirit, a process of involutions occurred for some limited purpose, the precise nature of which is beyond human comprehension. The creation of the universe in its initial form, which the modern theorists, such as Abbe Lamatre (1904), calls the Primeval Atom, resulted from the evolutionary impulse of God. In this, Primeval Atom, was originally concentrated, in a superdense state, that which expanded and disintegrated, through an antithetical evolutionary impulse, for thousands of millions of years, finally into the universe as it is today. This evolutionary impulse, whereby the Primeval Atom has issued into the innumerable forms constituting the universe, has reached its highest points, up-to-date, in the creation of man, and man, therefore, is the point in creation from where the inverse movement of evolution may take a further leap towards the Spirit. These two processes of involution and

28. Majh, V.

evolution constitute a double but simultaneous movement and thus, creation of the universe is an involution-cum-evolution process, a descent and an ascent. The universe, thus, is nothing but God-in-becoming. "The formless has become all the innumerable forms, Himself. He, that is beyond the attributes, is identical with all that in which attributes in here. Nanak declares the doctrine of the One Being that is Becoming, for, the one indeed in the many."²⁹

The main doctrines of Sikh theology are grounded in this view of the Ultimate Reality and its nature.

Genesis : With regard to the coming into being of the Primeval Atom, the Sikh doctrine is that the process was instantaneous, caused by the Will of God. "The forms become in consequence of the Divine Will. Comprehension fails at this stage of understanding the Divine Will."³⁰ After thus stating this beginning of the becoming, the further statements made in the Sikh scripture about the creation and evolution of the universe are remarkably akin to the picture which has now been adumbrated by modern speculation after taking into account the data revealed by the recent advances in observational astronomy. One of the basic hymns in the Sikh scripture, which may be called the Hymn of the Genesis, says :

For thousands and thousands of ages and for millions of aeons,

There was nothing in the beginning but nebulous density.

Neither solids, nor spaces were there

Only the Divine Impulse made become

Neither the day nor night, neither galaxies and solar systems

Nor satellites, but only God, self-absorbed.

The atmospheres, the imperium waters, the pre-conditions
Of all forms of life, and the sound, the prototype of all
becoming, They too were not there.

29. Gauri, Bawanakhri, V.

30. Japu, I.

There were no higher places, middle regions or lower spaces

For; the space as yet was not there,

And there was no all-consuming time either. When God Willed, He created the universes.

The expanse was caused without a formal cause. None knoweth His limits or limitlessness.

The True Teacher revealeth this secret.³¹

Man : The man being the highest yet attained point in the process of creation, on the phenomenal plane, where the evolutionary impulse has apparently near-exhausted its initial momentum, it is man on whom now the responsibility rests for consciously revitalising this impulse for a further evolutionary leap. "Thou art the very essence of God. Therefore, know thyself as such."³² The human body is the resting point of the process of creation and it is from here that the further upward movement towards the God-realisation starts. Therefore, involution cum-evolution which is responsible for the creation of the universe, and which after reaching the point of human consciousness has reached a stasis, and the man is thus a voluntary diminution of God. Since God is truth, knowledge, bliss, light, harmony and immortality, the involuted forms of creation are, so much less of all these. Man being the stage at which the evolution has emerged into self-consciousness, man is capable of knowing that he has reached a particular stage of the creative process, and he is capable volitionally, of taking steps to evolve upwards to the next stage. This is the stage of the *Brahmgyani*, or the God consciousness man, and it is to this stage of evolution, a vague and distorted premonition of which finds expression in the later 18th and early 19th century West European literature in the form of the concept of the superman. "Lo, I preach to you the superman; superman is the meaning of the earth,"³³ said Nietzsche. Again, "Man is a rope stretched

31. Maru, Solhe, I, 3-15.

32. Man tu jot sarup hai, apna mul pachhan. - Asa, III.

33. Asa, V.

between the animal and the superman. What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal."³⁴ Sikhism agrees with this except that Sikhism declares that the meaning of earth reaches far beyond the stage of this superman, and superman as conceived thus is not only an inadequate and distorted concept, but is merely an interim stage. Sikhism endorses Nietzsche that the sphere of the activity of the superman, and of the higher still stages of the evolution, is the earth, in the sense that it is on this earth, and other similar terrestrial spheres that a perfect human society of God-conscious men, of psycho-social perfection, is the ultimate objective of the impulse of God which has originally given rise to the process of creation. In contra-distinction to all those and previous philosophies and religions, which taught that the ultimate goal of man was either absorption into God or entry into a supramundane Kingdom of God, wherein there is abiding propinquity to God. Sikhism urges man to divinise the whole of humanity on this earth by transforming the mind, life and matter, through a conscious effort and will and with the aid of the spiritual technique of *Naamyoga*, which is capable of transforming the mental, vital and material stuff, of which the man is made, into subtler, finer and nobler substance capable of taking along the whole being to a level of existence undreamed of before, where pure knowledge, full harmony and divine bliss would prevail. This, indeed, would be a society of gods, and the ultimate purpose of the divine impulse of creation in the establishment of this society of human gods in the terrestrial spheres of the universe. It is the teachings of the Sikh Gurus that the supreme duty of man is to make an all-out effort towards this divine goal, and the Sikh Gurus not only point out this goal, but also reveal the way towards it. "Hail, the Guru, a hundred thousands times, hail, for, he reveals the secret of emergent transformation of man into gods."³⁵

34. Thus Spake Zaradusta 1, 4.

35. Var Asa, 1.

God : The Sikh concept of the Ultimate Reality is more akin to the Judiac notion of an Almighty Person than to the Aryan concept of an immanent neutral Principal. The basic formula of Sikh theology is the opening line of the Sikh scripture which characterises the Ultimate Reality as follows :

"I, Being-Becoming, Truth, Numenon, Creator, Person, Non-thesis Non-antithesis, Beyond Times, Form, Unborn, Self-expression, Light Gracious."

Maya : The doctrine of maya has been basic to the Hindu and Buddhist speculation from the very beginning. The best known work, apart from the omniscient *Mahabharata*, in which the term maya (relative truth) is employed as a philosophical concept, is the metrical treatise, *Karika* by Gaudpad, wherein, unlike the *Mahabharata* (*Bhagvadgita*, XVIII, 61), the term is not taken for granted, but is explained and defined. Since the proper name of Gaudpad was borne by the teacher of the famous philosopher of Hindu monism, Shankara, the author of the *Karika* may be the same person who might have lived at the end of 7th century. This work, *Karika*, is usually printed with the *Mandukaya-Upanishad*, and for practical purposes, is regarded a part of it. In language and thought, both, it bears a remarkable resemblance to Buddhist writings of the *Madhyamik* School, and the criticism of the Hindu orthodoxy that "The monism of Shankara, in which the doctrine of maya is embedded, is, in reality, crypto- Buddhism"³⁶ is not without substance. In the *Karika*, the world of appearances is compared to the apparent circle of fire produced by whirling lighted torch. This striking image first occurs in the *Maitrayana-Upanishad* (vi 24). It also occurs in the Buddhist Mahayan scripture, the *Lankavtarsutra*, which purports to be an account of the revelation of the true Religion by Gautama, the Buddha, when he visited Ceylon (Now Sri Lanka) and there gave discourses to the King of the island, Ravana, and his wife,

36. Maya-vadam asachhastram, prachhannam Bauddha-(Vaishnava) Padam-purana.

Mahamati. This text represents a well-matured phase of speculation in Buddhism, as it criticises the Hindu School of Philosophy of the Sankhaya, Pashupat, as well as other Schools. It includes a prophecy about the birth of Nagarjuna, the great Buddhist savant of the 4th century AD, and it mentions the advent of Guptas which marks the renaissance of Hinduism in India. It also alludes to fresh incursions of the Hunas into northern India, which incursions destroyed the Imperial Gupta dynasty at the end of the 5th century AD. Throughout the Hindu speculative and religious literature ever since, this doctrine of *maya* is admitted as, in some way, an independent principle of the process of creation. True, the subtle Shankra asserts that the principle of *maya* is *anirvachaniya*, i.e., it can neither be said to exist nor not to exist. A is neither A, nor not-A. Whatever else this statement may mean, it does implicate that *maya* has a positive existence. Sikhism denies the doctrine of *maya*, thus conceived. As ignorance and nescience have no positive existence, they merely being the aspects of the self-limited involuted Spirit, like wise, *maya*, as such, has no positive existence. It is merely a way of saying that the individual consciousness perceives the reality only in the form of partial knowledge which is so on account of the process of involution. As the darkness is merely a negative aspect of the light of the sun, similar is the case with ignorance and nescience :

"What is there positive to which we can give the name of *maya* ? What positive activity the *maya* is capable of ? The human soul is subject to the pleasure and pain principle in its very nature as long as it operates on the individuated plan of consciousness."³⁷

This interpretation of the concept of *maya* in Sikh theology has far-reaching consequences in so far as it pulls the Hindu mind out of the slough of much indolent introspective pre-occupation and subjectivism generated by the belief that

37. Srirag, Astpadi, III.

the whole world of the appearances in which man is born to pursue his socio-political life, is no more real than a phantasmagoria in the minds of the gods above. By giving a foundation of solid reality to the world of appearances, this re-interpretation of the concept of maya concepts a sense of reality, a feeling of urgency and an objectivity to the whole frame of mind, which is necessary for the all-out effort to speed up the evolutionary process through the human will, and this is the core of the precepts of Sikhism, as a way of life.

Ethics : The fact that religious experience, *per se*, is non-moral, has been known to Hindu thought from the very beginning. In the West, it has been recognised clearly only in recent times. It was Dr. Otto, who in his *Idea of the Holy*, about a quarter of a century ago, made this point finally clear. In the Judaic religious tradition, for all practical purposes, religious life and ethical conduct appear to have been identified. The Ten Commandments of Moses are ethical precepts. In the Koran, it is these ethical commands which are presented as the essence of religion. Western scholars are sometimes shocked at the stories narrated and adored in the ancient Hindu texts, of the deeds of gods which do not conform with strict ethical standards, and about which the narrator of the story expresses no moral horror and passes no censorial judgment. From this, the Western reader erroneously concludes that ethics has no place in the Hindu religious practice and tradition. This is far from the truth. From the very beginning, in the Hindu thought and tradition, it has been recognised that ethical conduct is the very foundation on which the life of a religious man must be based. The rule of conduct of the Buddhist sermons the formulary of conduct of the Jain *bhikshus* the daily rules made obligatory for Brahmin in almost all basic Hindu texts, bear ample testimony to the fact that the relation of ethics to religion has always been considered as intimate by the Hindus. It is true that the Hindu thought recognises that the man of highest religious experience is, like the superman of Nietzsche, beyond good and evil, but that is not to say that

in Hindu tradition the ethical values have no place in religious life. In Sikhism, while it is recognised that the highest religious experience is unmoral and belongs to a category of value which is not ethical, it is nevertheless stressed that without strict ethical purity of conduct there is no possibility of any advance in the religious experience. A religious life, not strictly grounded in ethical conduct, or a religious discipline which ignores the ethical requirements, is considered in Sikhism a great error. "The seed of the testament of the Guru cannot germinate except in the field of ethical conduct, constantly irrigated by the waters of truth."³⁸ "A man of religion is ever characterised by ethical deeds, honest living, sincerity of heart, and a fearless passion for truth."³⁹ Nanak maketh this public declaration, let all men ponder over it. Ethical conduct is the only true foundation of human life on earth.⁴⁰ "Sikhism, thus, lays a stress on morality which raises the moral law to a high status which was not generally countenanced by the Hindus and Buddhists. The Buddhist and Brahminic systems appear to assume tacitly that morality is a means to felicity and it is not obedience to a law which exists in its own right as demanding obedience, what Immanuel Kant calls, the Categorical Imperative. It is true that by them moral conduct is regarded as governed by the cosmic law, called the law of *Karma*, which means that good deeds bring good results and evil deeds bring evil results. Sikhism, however, raises ethical conduct to a higher and more sovereign status, and makes it as the true expression of the harmony of human personality with the Will of God. All ethical conduct, therefore, is not merely conducive to good results such as happiness, but it is primarily an act of establishment of concord between the human personality and the person of God. Since this concord is the highest end and the goal of human existence and endeavour, it is, therefore,

38. Sriyag, I.

39. Gauri Sukhmani, I.

40. Sorath, I.

the basic ingredient of the highest activity of man, which is religion. Thus, Sikhism, while recognising that the order of Reality, which is revealed as numenon to the human experience is not identical with the category of ethical experience, it unequivocally emphasises that the two cannot be divorced or separated and that the nature of the numenon is such that its realisation is impossible without ethical conduct.

In this way, the Sikh thought fuses the Hindu thought and the semitic tradition on the subject of ethics and religion.

Free Will : European philosophy and theology have been much exercised over the subject of the free will, while the Hindu tradition has considered this topic as of minor importance. The explanation for this lies in their analytical understanding of the concept. In European thought, an individual is conceived of as a permanent fixed entity, basically separate from the rest of the world which is his universe. It is argued that without freedom of will there is no moral responsibility, and if there is no moral responsibility, there can neither be guilt nor punishment, either in society¹, or hereafter, before the throne of God. This problem has not much troubled the Hindu mind for two reasons. In the first place, the Hindu thought rightly considers that there is no such thing as a completely independent and stable entity called the individual, and secondly, the Hindu argues, and quite rightly, that if the human will is not free then what does the term 'freedom' mean? What instance shall we bring forth with which to contrast the supposed determination of the human will? Our notion of 'freedom' is inalienable, derived from our own experience to which we give the name of 'will'. Whatever, therefore, we may mean by 'freedom', it is ultimately in the terms of our experience of our own will, that we give meanings to it. Thus interpreted, to say that human will is free, is an axiom and a tautology. There is no meaning in the thesis that human will is not free, for 'free' is that which is like unto the human will. The trouble, however, arises when

we give to the expression 'free will', a meaning which we have not derived from any deep analysis of our experience of our will, but which have been superimposed by our intellect. Thus, we like to think that 'free will' is that power of volition of the human individual which is totally uncaused and unconditioned. A little reflection, however, will show that such a 'freedom' does not, in fact, exist and further, that if it did and could exist, it will destroy all foundations of 'moral responsibility', 'guilt' and justification for 'punishment', either here or hereafter. To being with, there are the facts of heredity, the environment, and the sub-conscious mind. There is not much doubt that the individual is the product of his heredity, the inner mechanism of which the science of biology has partially discovered recently in the fertilized germ-cells and its genes, which make all the organic cells that make up the body, including the brain and the nervous system. This pattern we inherit from our parents and our ancestors, and it is certainly a determination of the choices that we make in our lives from time to time. New psychology has revealed to us the sub-conscious layers of human mind as the seat of instincts, emotions, and intuitions, accumulated, for those who faithfully follow the dogma of the Church Council of Constantinople (553, A.D.), which anathematised the doctrine of transmigration, in the race pattern during evolution of millions of years or, for those who hold the doctrine of metempsychosis as fundamental, accumulated in the course of millions of previous births and rebirths of the individual. They are certainly a determinant throughout a man's life in the matter of his choice and the conduct that follows it. Again, from outside, the social environment is active in continuously influencing and moulding an individual's mind, and thereby his power of choice and conduct. These three factors, the physical, the environmental, and the hereditary, are there as a fact and their power of influencing the human powers of choice cannot be denied. In this context, there cannot be a free

will, as an uncaused and unconditioned factor which solely determines as to what choice an individual will make. But even if there were such a 'free' will, it will entail disastrous consequences for the science of ethics and the doctrine of moral responsibility. If a man's actions are not free when they can be shown to be causally chained to his character, the sum total of his heredity, past experiences and environment, then the only circumstances in which it would be proper to call a man 'free' would be those in which he acted independently of his received character, i.e., of his habits, desires, urges, and perspective on life and all the rest. But if this agent of 'free' action is not to be identified with that which is subject to particular desires and urges, which is circumscribed by a given environmental and circumstantial set-up, which is devoid of character, motives, persistent interests and the like, then who is this agent of 'free' choice, the 'he'? Such a notion of 'free' will completely dissolves the agent of action; a person with such a 'free' will is a completely disembodied and unidentifiable entity. Such an entity can neither be blamed nor praised, nor held responsible for what it does, for it would be clearly unreasonable to hold an individual responsible for his actions if we did not think there was a causal connection between his character and his conduct. When we can show that there is no such connection, as, for instance, that an act is committed as a result of coercion, we do not normally hold him responsible. The reason is not that the one act is 'uncaused' and 'free', while the other is 'determined'. The reason lies in the kind of the cause; in the one case, the cause lies in the character of the individual over which he has, in some sense, control, while in the other case he has no such control. As we gain new knowledge about the kinds of causes that affect conduct, we change our mind about the kinds of behaviour for which we should hold men responsible. The recent shifts of stress in the science of penology in the modern world, and the ancient wisdom of the east and west which iterated that an individual is ultimately responsible for

nothing, must be appreciated in the context of this analysis, and not in the superficial frame of reference of 'determinism' and 'free will'. "A man reaps only that what he sows in the field of *karma*,"⁴¹ declares the Sikh scripture. It simultaneously asserts that, "Say what precisely it is that an individual. can do out of his free choice? He acteth as God Willeth."⁴² And the *Bhagvadgita* asserts that, "God sits in the heart of every creature with the consequence that all revolve in their set courses, helplessly, tied to the wheel of *maya*."⁴³ That man is free to choose and act to some extent, and to the extent that he is so, to that extent alone he is morally responsible and subject to praise and blame, is a true statement; that there is no such entity, and no such entity is conceivable, which is wholly 'uncaused' and 'undetermined', and further that in the ultimate analysis, the whole area of individuality can be shown to be linked to a penumbral cause of complex of causes which are supra-individuality is also a true statement, and these two true statements are not self-contradictory or incompatible with each other constitutes the Sikh doctrine on the subject.

This brings us back to our immediate experience that seems to carry its own certitude with it, that in some sense we are free, we have the notion of freedom as the core of this experience. Sikhism, while implicitly taking note of the three factors, and the ultimate factor out of which they stem out, which determine the powers of human choice, lays pragmatic stress on this fourth factor, perpetually present and operative in the human mind, which is the autonomous power of choice. This autonomous power of choice is the divinity in man, according to Sikhism, and it is this core around which the whole human personality is constructed. It is this central core of the human personality which is at the heart of the individual consciousness, and it is, therefore, "the source of

41. Baramaha Majh, V.

42. Gauri Sukhmani, V.

43. *Bhagvadgita*, XVIII. 61.

all human misery, as well as the panacea of all his ills."⁴⁴ "How shall man demolish the wall of nascence that separates him from God? By being in tune with the Will of God; And how shall we know the Will of God? Nanak answers: It is embedded in the very core of human personality."⁴⁵

It is this autonomous power of free choice which is endowed to every human personality and by virtue of which the effects of the other three observable determining factors of human choice are interfused and, thus, the act of free human choice gives birth to a new event which is not wholly determined, and which is not a mere combination and aggregation of all these four factors, but which is a new event, unique in nature, and potently capable of giving rise to other similar events in the future. It is this power of free choice that is included in man's heritage which has the capacity to go beyond this heritage and, thus, within the limits given, a human being is free to shape his own destiny. Nor are the other factor, his received character, the Individual circumstances merely accidental and fortuitously superimposed upon the individual, for they too are the fruits of his past *karma* of many previous births and, thus, are self-determined, result of free choices made. When and why did an individual make the first free but wrong choice? This question relates to the First Things, and, therefore, exhypothesis, the individual comprehension fails at this point for, "the son knoweth not the birth of his father."⁴⁶

This is the view of 'free will' in relation to the doctrine of the *karma* which Sikhism teaches.

Karma: The doctrine of *karma* is not the same as the doctrine of pre-destination of Christian theology. Karma is, in a sense, fate, not pre-destination, for, within the limits given, and these limits constitute the *karma* inherited from the previous births, a man is free. This *karma* is not fate because

44. Haumain diragh rog hai, daru bhi is mahi. -Var Asa. I.

45. Japu, I.

46. Gauri Sukhmani, V.

all the time we are making our own *karma* and determining the character of our further status and births. The doctrine of *karma*, as understood in higher Hinduism, and as expounded in Sikhism, merely teaches that our present limitations are traceable to our acts of autonomous choice in our past lives and as such our *karma* is a source of rewards and punishments which we must enjoy and endure. "Ignorant mind of mine, why blame God, for the good and evil of this life is verily thy own *karma*"⁴⁷ But this idea differs from the idea of fate, as commonly understood in European thought, in as much as it is not inexorable, for, all the time we are making our own *karma* within a context, the core of which is always free and autonomous.

Evil : The existence of evil is the main reason, or one of the main reasons for the existence of religion, and the explanation of evil is the chief problem of theologies and religious philosophies. Whether it was God who created evil and whether evil is due to misuse of the gift of free will, are problems which constantly occur and recur in almost all religions of the world. The main trend of Hindu thought on this problem is that since the world itself is unreal, the existence of evil in it is not of greater concern to the individual than the world itself. A Hindu would assert that the proper course for the human souls is to seek *mukti*, liberation, or union with God, by renouncing and discarding this vain show of appearances, called the world. The Hindu, thus, is not very much concerned to prove that evil does not really exist in the world, or to explain why God allows it to exist. Since the world itself is no more than a phantom and an insubstantial dream, the evil itself cannot be of a more enduring substance, and, at any rate, it is of no direct concern to the man of religion. Sikhism cannot and, therefore, does not adopt this view, because Sikhism does not accept the ultimate dichotomy of the matter and the spirit, and does not accept as an independent

⁴⁷ Gauri Namdev.

entity, the principle of illusion, i.e., *maya*. Since Sikhism postulates that religious activity must be practised in the socio-political context of the world, the problem of evil to it is very much a real problem, as it is to the European thinker. Sikhism, therefore, returns almost the same answer to the problem of evil which the European pantheist gives, namely, that since God is all things and in all things, the evil is only something which is a partial view of the whole, something which appears as such when not seen from the due perspective. Sikhism asserts that there is no such thing as the principle of evil, as some theologies postulate, although there are things in this world which are evil. This antithesis of evil and good, according to Sikhism, is a necessary characteristic of the process of involution which the spirit is undergoing in the process of creation of the world. Evil and good appear at one stage of this involution-cum-evolution and they disappear when the process of evolution culminates into the Unitive experience of God, just as the white ray of light splits into its variegated spectrum while passing through a prism, and again gathers these multichromatic hues into its all-absorbing whiteness, when it becomes itself again. This explanation and statement of the doctrine of evil is laid down almost in as many words in the *Sukhmani* of the Fifth Nanak, and also at numerous other places in the Sikh scripture. "When a complete perspective is granted to man by the grace of God, all evil is seen to melt into its primal source, which is all-Good."⁴⁸ "There is no independent principle of evil in the universe, because God is All-Good and nothing that proceeds from All-Good can be really evil, and there is naught which proceeds from ought but God."⁴⁹

Numenon and Sansar or The Reality and Appearance : Sansar is the principle of change, which determines the world of phenomena, and in Hindu thought and in many other

48. Jisai bujhai tisai sabh bhali —Gauri Sukhmani, V.

49. Is te hoe so nahi bura, orai kahahu kinai kachhu kara. — Sukhmani, 23-7.

systems of metaphysics, it has been argued that on this account it is unreal. It is presumed as axiomatic that the real must not be infected with change. The basic theological formula of Sikhism, with which the Sikh scripture opens, is proceeded by the exegetic statement that, "all change, all evolution, all that is characterised by the time-process, is ultimately real."⁵⁰ The numenon, the order of reality, which is revealed to the human mind through gnosis, therefore, is not something which is fundamentally different and away from the phenomenon. That what is altered in the gnosis is not that what really is, but it is the mode of perception and the quality of prehension of the individual, which is transformed, thus revealing the vision of the numenon. It is this very mundane and the material world and the phenomena which is freshly and differently pretended and cognised by the human consciousness, when it is enlarged and purified. Sikhism, therefore, is in agreement with the aphorism of the great Buddhist philosopher, Buddhagosa who declared, that "*Yas-sansaras tan-nirvanam*", i.e., "the flux and the Absolute are the same." This world of fleeting appearances that you see, is, in fact, the true face of God and as such it is revealed to the consciousness of the emancipated man."⁵¹

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF SIKHISM

The life story of Guru Nanak, called the *Janamsakhi*, the earliest written record we have of the travels of the Guru, records that Guru Nanak summed up the Sikh tenets wherever he went, in the following triple precept:

Kirat Karo, Wand Chhako, Nam Japo.

ਕਿਰਤ ਕਰੋ, ਵੰਡ ਛਕੋ, ਨਾਮ ਜਪੋ।

It means, thou shalt earn the livelihood by honest creative labour, thou shalt share the fruits of the labour with

Sl. Japu, I.

Sl. Ramkali, Anand, III.

the fellow beings, and, thou shalt practise the Discipline of the Name.

These are rightly regarded as the basic commandments of Sikhism.

We have already explained, in brief, the implications and consequences of the discipline of the Name and it is important for the man of religion. This discipline of the Name, a new synthesized and integrated, yoga, is to be practised in the context of socio-political life, in which man does not turn his back on the society, and does not renounce the world. The first two precepts, that of honest productive work, and sharing of it: fruits with fellow-beings, are to constitute the foundation of the Sikh society while the remaining third is to vitalise and regenerate it.

Sikhism envisages a time, almost within sight now, when the local heritages of the different historic nations, civilisations, peoples, and religions will have coalesced into a common heritage of the whole human family, and Sikhism further declares that neither the natural sciences, nor philosophical intellectual speculations, which integrate, the basic concepts of natural sciences into philosophy and metaphysics can rescue man from his state of inherent limitation and suffering, and that the religious discipline of the Name alone can do it. Guru Nanak says that :

"Even if a hundred moons arise and a thousand suns shine, all this light combined cannot dispel the nescience with which man is afflicted and which the light of God, that is the religion, alone can dispel and destroy." (*Var Asa, I*)

The words 'sun' and 'moon' have been used in this text by the Guru in the idiom which has been set by the Veda, for, the Veda's imprint upto Hindu Aryan mind is permanent and unmistakable, even on those who represent a reaction against Vedism. Vedism is not only a religion, it is even more technique of learned theologians and inspired poets, vipra, "the quivering ones", and it constitutes also the Mimansa, the jurisprudence of the *yajna*, the ritual act. Vedism has also

developed a number of secular disciplines, such as phonetics, grammar, astronomy, and even rudiments of geometry and law. *Nighantu* is the oldest lexicon in any Indo-European language and in the *Nighantu* the words are grouped as series of synonyms. These synonyms, as arranged in the *Nighantu* are, as a rule, secondary metaphysical acceptations, constituted and arrived at in accordance with the laws of occult equivalences. In the Veda, the words employed are multivious, polysignificant, and that is why the Vedic idiom is described as *vakrokti*, 'crooked', and for this reason the *Nirukta* commentary says, that, *proksa kamahi devah*, the gods are in love with the cryptic. It is in this sense that the Rig Veda declares that "the moon took birth in the mind and the sun in the eyes (of the Cosmic Man)"⁵². The metaphysical correlation and occult equivalence of 'moon', then, is mind and that of 'sun', the physical perception, the 'eye'. In the text of Guru Nanak just quoted, the expression 'moon' signifies the integrating speculations of the mind, which result in philosophy, based on the stuff of the basic concepts and hypotheses of the natural sciences. Likewise, the term 'sun' here means the objective natural sciences, the knowledge of which is derived through the sensory motor perceptions and, thus, the text under reference refers to the natural sciences and the systems of metaphysics, as it has been explained above.

In the Semitic Judaic religions, the religion is equated with the law, which is reduced into dead letters of utilitarian ethics. Sikhism emphasises that the ethical law is not religion *per se*, that the core of the religion is the numenon, sacredness in the sense of non-moral holiness as a category of value, and a state of mind and a spiritual experience, peculiar to religion, but that the ethical law is, in some intimate sense, a necessary adjunct of religious life and a penumbra of the religious experience. It, therefore, insists on these three precepts as necessary ingredients of the life of man who would practise religion.

⁵² Rig Veda, X 90-13.

To begin with, therefore, in the society which Sikhism recommends as the pattern for the global society, every individual must engage himself in honest creative labour. Parasitism, in any shape or form, is not only anti-social, but anti-religious also. Secondly, these precepts of Sikhism ensure that there shall be no exploitation of man by man with capital, i.e., the accumulated wealth shall not be employed as an instrument of exploitation. This is a necessary implication of the precept that the religious man must share the fruits of his labour with his fellow creatures. From this it follows that Sikhism regards a co-operative society as the only truly religious society.

How is this Sikh co-operative society distinguished from the modern concepts of socialist society, a welfare, and a communist society?

The basic element which distinguishes a Sikh co-operative society from all these modern social concepts is grounded in the Sikh concept of the world as the very "form of God". *Hari ka rup*, and the status of the individual as the very microcosm of God, *Joti sarup*, and an individual, therefore, must never be imposed upon or coerced. "If thou wouldst seek God, demolish not the heart of any individual,"⁵³ is a text in the Sikh scripture. The Tenth Nanak, in one of his hymns, addressing God says that, "I pray to you, God, for this purpose, so that I may be imposed upon by no authority external to myself."⁵⁴ Herein lies that which essentially distinguishes a religious co-operative society, as conceived by Sikhism, from the modern societies that are grounded in the doctrines of socialism, communism and welfarism.

It sententiously declares that "God Almighty alone is the undisputed King competent to rule over men; all mortals who claim the right to do so are false pretenders."⁵⁵ While Sikhism

53. Sloku. — Farid.

54. Aur Sikh hon apne hi man kau. — *Dasamgranth*, Akal Ustat.

55. Koi Hari samaan nahi Raja. — Bilaval. I.

is in sympathy with most of these ideas with which it is sought to justify the ideals of these theories, and in fact maintains that the ideal Sikh society shall be based on these ideas, it is out of sympathy with the evolution and growth of any apparatus which enables a class of men to exploit an individual to suppress and subjugate him in the name of abolishing the exploitation of man by man.

It, therefore, follows that while Sikhism seeks to establish a social pattern, and eventually a global society in which the socialist ideas of individual welfare, equality and freedom shall have full application, it is opposed to any development which, in practice and reality, seeks to curtail and destroy the worth and inner autonomy of the individual. It is for this reason that Sikhism conceives of the religious evolution of man as a necessary and integral pre-requisite and condition of its march towards the ideal society.

Sikhism warns against the fallacy out of which this dilemma arises, and it uncompromisingly opposes all theories and practices which seek to build a fully happy and prosperous society on merely secular basis.

A possible misconception about the Sikh notions on the subject must be removed here. The ideal Sikh society is not a religious or church state or a theocratic organisation. A religious state is based on the assumption that unity of religion is, more or less, necessary in order to secure national unity and strength, and in order to maintain order and social harmony. The terrible life and death struggle into which the Sikhs were pushed by the Mughal emperors, informed and guided by the doctrines of the political Islam, as expounded by the *Mujaddid*, resulted precisely from this assumption of Islamic polity. The wars of religion, and the prolonged periods of bloodshed which have disfigured the history of Europe for hundreds of years, are also seen to be the necessary concomitants of this assumption. The peace of Augsburg in 1555 concluded to end wars of religion in Europe on the principle, *cuius regia, cuius*

religio i.e., that every subject must accept the religion of his ruler, is precisely the principle which animated and sustained Emperor Aurangzeb throughout his long and eventful reign. The sub-conscious traces of this assumption still linger in the India of today to which alone certain recent developments in the body politic of the country can ultimately be traced. Similarly, a theocratic state is based on the presumption that the rulers are answerable, not for the welfare of the bodies of their subjects, but for the salvation of their souls, and that the end of all political endeavour is not in this world but the next. Sikhism considers these assumptions as unwarranted, for, it believes that there lies a fundamental and higher unity in all true religions which are apparently diverse and that, therefore, the social harmony and the national unity of a state must be founded on this fundamental unity and not wholesale conformity. The Tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, has laid it down that "The temple and the mosque, the worship of God by the Aryans and the prayers to Him of the Semitics, are fundamentally the same."⁵⁶ Sikhism thus postulates that it is the duty of an organised religion, which postulate it an article of creed in Sikhism, not only to acquiesce in the provision of liberty of conscience to non-Sikhs, but also to defend the right to such liberty of those whose conscience moves them in a seemingly different direction. For achieving enduring agreement and unity, the order of the Khalsa relies upon the methods of enlightenment and persuasion in place of coercion and brain-washing, while recognising all the while that though the Truth is one, the roads to it are many, and, therefore, the Sikhs pray that, "Let all be saved through whatever path can save them."⁵⁷ Sikhism generally endorses the view of the medieval saint that, "the heart of so great a mystery cannot ever be reached by following one road only."⁵⁸

56. *Dasamgranth*, Akal Ustat.

57. Var Bilawal, III.

58. Quintas Aurelius in Controversy with Ambrose.

These, broadly are the social implications of Sikhism, in the context of the modern political world situation and thought.

CONCLUSION

In the year 1960, we are at a stage of world history in which not only the distance has been annihilated, but other walls such as those of language, history, tradition, that separate peoples and nations from each other, have also been considerably lowered, the different living religions, therefore, are now in a position to look at each other with the eyes of comparison and to find as to in what points they fundamentally differ from their contemporaries, in the matter of doctrine and religious experience. This task of comparison entails re-assessment of the ancestral heritage of each religion and this process of re-assessment is by far the most hopeful sign which promises the emergence of a world Religion and a world Society, which is the dream of Sikhism.

To distinguish Sikhism from the other higher and world religions, therefore, it is necessary to point out the broad points of agreement between Sikhism and the other religions, as well as the points of difference.

It is a common postulate of all higher religions of mankind that there is a spiritual presence which mysteriously sustains the universe of phenomena, and that it is this spiritual presence which is absolutely real. In this postulate, Sikhism agrees with the higher living religions of the world, such as, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam.

Another postulate of these higher religions is that man finds himself not only in need of arriving at an awareness of this absolute reality, but also to be in communion with it, in touch with it. There is a basic urge in man which demands that unless this is done, he cannot feel himself at home in the world in which he finds himself born and living.

This is an implicit postulate of all the aforementioned

higher and living religions, and Sikhism is in agreement with them in accepting this postulate.

With regard to the nature of this spiritual presence, which lies behind and sustains the world of phenomena, it is agreed by all these higher living religions that it is not contained in, and is greater than, either some of the phenomena or the sum total of the phenomena, including the man himself.

Sikhism agrees with this.

All these great religions agree with each other in asserting that the nature of this absolute reality, which lies behind and sustains the phenomena, has an aspect which is neuter and which is impersonal. The *nirvana* of the Buddhism and *parbrahma* of Hinduism, and the experience of the mystics of Islam and Christianity, affirm this aspect and characteristic of absolute reality. But, they further agree that this absolute reality has also a personal aspect. The Mahayana Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam are all agreed that the absolute reality has a face which is personal, in the sense in which a human being is a person, and that human beings encounter this personal face of the absolute reality in the same sense in which one individual human being encounters another. What precisely this personal aspect is; whether it periodically manifests itself in the form of an *avtar*, a divine descent, or it has manifested itself only once-for-all time and in a unique incarnation, is not universally agreed. But all these great living religions agree that the spiritual presence which permeates and sustains the world of phenomena has a personal aspect. Mahayana declares that this personal aspect of Absolute Reality manifests itself in the *bodhisattavas* and is plural. For Hinduism and for Christianity, this personal aspect is *triune*, i.e., it assumes the form of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, or the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. In Islam, this personal aspect is deemed as singular in the form of God, the Allah.

In this matter, Sikhism, while accepting that the personal aspect of the Absolute Reality is singular, declares this Person

to be the Universal Mind of which all other finite minds are but emanations. These finite minds are at each moment one with the Universal Mind, the essence of their finitude being eliminative and not productive. That what makes a mind finite and distinguished from the Universal Mind is, what has been eliminated out of it, and not what has been produced by it. It is this Universal Mind which Sikhism holds as the Absolute Reality, and it is from this doctrine that the basic teachings of Sikhism, which essentially aim at the destruction of the self-centredness of the individual mind, arise.

Thus, although Sikhism is largely in agreement with the basic postulates of the great living religions of the world, it has its points of distinction which are not less important and which when translated into action, i.e., into the counsel which it gives to mankind to attain its highest destiny, lead to practices and consequences which not only mark Sikhism from the other great religions, but also make it of peculiar interest to the modern man.

THE CHINESE AGGRESSION*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Resolution moved by the Leader of the House on the Chinese aggression subject to the amendment moved by professor Ranga with others.

Sir, I am persuaded that a proper discussion of the subject cannot be had unless there is made a particular mention of the Sikh people in relation to the present crisis. In doing so, therefore, I am convinced that thereby the interests of the nation are served in so far as it may result in clarification of issues, requisite reassurances and a new understanding, without which new critical situations, such as the present one, can never be adequately faced.

Sir, the Sikhs as a people have special reason to be shocked and angered at the wanton aggression against our Himalayan frontiers by the Peoples' Government of China. Although Ladakh was a part of the great Mughal Empire of India in the seventeenth century, in 1834, during the life time of Maharaja Ranjit Singh himself, Ladakh was taken by the Sikh troops under the command of Col. Zorawar Singh. In April, 1841 two years after the death of Ranjit Singh, Prince Nau Nihal Singh, the Vice-Regent of the Sikh Government ordered Zorawar Singh, who was made a General by then, to demand Garo's adhesion to the Punjab on the ground that it was a dependency of Iskardu and Iskardu was then a province of the Punjab. It was prince Nau Nihal Singh who then formally demanded that in view of the changed circumstances

* Lok Sabha Speech of November 12, 1962.

Lhasa should pay tribute to Lahore and not to Peking and that Tibet should seek advice from the Punjab Government which was, at that time, the only part of India enjoying sovereign political powers. Thus, in substance, the demand of the Sikhs was for establishing intimate relations of India with Tibet. To achieve these aims it was that in June 1841, the Punjabis captured the town of Garo, and on the 29th August, hoisted the Sikh flag at Tuklakot. In this manner, the Punjabis like the Indus itself pierced the heart of Tibet to its very core. Then followed certain reverses more due to cold weather than the human adversaries in the battlefield. In the spring of 1842, Gulab Singh, who was no more than a Sikh feudatory chief at that time and who had yet to render special services to the British to become a "Maharaja" of Jammu and Kashmir, after destruction of the Sikh Commonwealth of the Punjab was commanded to rush reinforcements to Leh, where they encircled the Chinese forces, flushed the enemy out of their entrenchments and decimated them after taking the Chinese General as a prisoner. On the 17th October, 1842, envoys of the Sikh Durbar including the personal representative of Gulab Singh, signed a Treaty with the representatives of the Chinese Emperor and the Dalai Lama of Lhasa. The parties to this Treaty are the "Khalsa jio," that is, the Sikh people and the Chinese Emperor and the Buddhist pontiff of Tibet. Gulab Singh does not come in there and is not mentioned in the original document except through a later interpolation. It was agreed by this Treaty that the boundaries of Ladakh and Lhasa would remain as traditionally recognized and considered inviolable by either party and that trade, particularly of tea and *pashmina* wool would, as in the past, pass through Ladakh.

Sir, I have disagreed into these historical details for two reasons. Firstly, during recent years it has become customary to present this chapter of Indian history in a slightly different manner so as to create and sustain the legend that the Ladakh region of India is a gift from the Dogra ruler, "Maharaja" Gulab Singh of Kashmir. On page 52 of the Government of

India Report of the officials on the Boundary Questions, published by the Ministry of External Affairs in 1961, as well as on page 4 of the Booklet *Menace to India's Freedom* published by the Publications Divisions of the Government, November, 1962. This legend is supported and a sensitive section of the Sikh people perceive in it a link in some plan to demonetise the Sikhs as the builders of India, a history with the ultimate object of pushing them out of the main stream of History as people, Secondly, it explains why the present aggression of the Chinese into these areas has touched the Sikhs more intimately and has aroused their anger specially, on the ground that the Chinese people's Government now aim at destroying the work which the Sikhs had accomplished for the consolidation of the natural and true frontiers of India.

The Sikhs therefore justly feel that it is their special responsibility to defend the country and to make all possible sacrifices during the crisis which has been forced upon the nation by our unscrupulous neighbour. Sir, the Sikh people react to historical situations somewhat differently from their neighbours for the reason that the peculiar view of Reality that they hold accords a substantial status to spatio-temporal events and for the reason that their peculiar ethos demand a sensitive awareness of the historical process. The present occasion reminds the Sikhs of an identical occasion that arose almost a century ago, when the British East India company's forces unscrupulously and crudely aggressed into the frontiers of the Sikh Empire of Punjab in the winter of the year 1845. This East India Company Bahadur was, at that time, bound by a *Panchashile* treaty relation with the Sikhs. A Muslim Poet Shah Mohammad, has immortalized in poignant verse the substance of the Sikh Army Headquarter's Mobilization Orders which were then issued. That says :

ਹੋਇਆ ਕੂਚ ਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਸਭ ਰਜਮਣਾਂ ਨੂੰ,
ਘੋੜ ਚੜੇ ਭੀ ਨਾ ਪਿੱਛੇ ਰੱਖਣੇ ਜੀ।
ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨੀਆਂ ਪਲਟਣਾਂ ਰਹਿਣ ਦੇਖੇ,
ਸੂਹੇ ਸ਼ਹਿਰ ਦੇ ਹੋਣ ਨਾ ਸੱਖਣੇ ਜੀ।

ਗਰਖਾਲੀਏ ਡੋਗਰੇ ਜਾਣ ਪੱਛਮ,
ਓਏ ਮੁਲਖ ਦੇ ਰਹਿਣ ਸੁਰੱਖਣੇ ਜੀ।
ਕਲਗੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਹੋਣ ਮੂਹਰੇ,
ਅੱਗੇ ਹੋਰ ਗਰੀਬ ਨਾ ਪੱਕਣੇ ਜੀ।

These orders proceeded to declare 'a total mobilization of the standing forces of the Army, including the cavalry and they directed that "the good and faithful Muslim regiments of the Khalsa Army were to assume the delicate task of protecting the Heart of the Empire, the Capital, while, the Hindu regiments consisting of Dogras and Gurkhas must be deployed on the North-Western Frontiers." The orders specifically directed that 'so far as the active battle front on the Sutlej banks was concerned, the enemy fire must be faced primarily by the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh whose privilege and duty it was to die for protecting the honour and integrity of the country.'

Sir, the Sikhs, at this juncture of the history of our country now demand that their inalienable right and privilege of dying for their country before others should be conceded to them.

Such is the answer which the Sikh people would like to make to those who have suspected them of harbouring separatist tendencies, of confusing politics with religion, and of thwarting national integration during the past fifteen years. By willingly and enthusiastically undergoing through this ordeal of fire, the Sikhs hope to convince everyone that the only reparation that they long for is the right to maintain and grow their group individuality, that the only sovereign state that they want to acclaim and preserve as their own is the one which extends from the outskirts of Holy Amritsar to Kanyakumari, that they subordinate politics to religion for the fundamental reason that nationalism, though it may enable the patriot to meet death, can do nothing to explain it, that the only integration that is acceptable to them is the one which concedes existence of diversity as the only sure basis of unity.

With these words, I support the amendment moved by Shri Ranga to the effect that the Resolution moved by the Leader of the House would remain unrealistic and some what incomplete unless this House also resolves its awareness of, and its sense of regret, at the state of unpreparedness in which we are shown to have been found by the Chinese invasion on the frontiers. This Resolution will further remain incomplete unless we specifically record our unreserved acknowledgement of the graceful and true friendliness with which the Governments of the great peoples of the U.S.A., the United Kingdom and Canada in particular have offered to extend help to us. Likewise, we must be grateful to the other forty or more countries of the world who have sympathized with us.

With these words. I conclude my support of the amendment moved by Shri Ranga.

RISE OF SIKH MILITARY POWER*

Sir, I am going to confine myself particularly to three demands. Nos. 3 (Ministry of Defence), 53 (Ministry of Home Affairs) and 61 (Ministry of Information and Broadcasting).

(Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

I am sorry that Shri Chavan is not here. I am going to strike a somewhat jarring note which I wanted to do in his presence. I am going to urge that the House should reject the entire Demand of Rs. 61,78,000 on the ground that this Ministry has failed to dispel the widespread public suspicions that under the present Defence Minister, the functional powers of our armed forces are sought to be perverted towards parochial and narrow ends and thus the national policy to India is in danger of being subverted.

I would, with a view to illustrate my point, give two instances, not for what they are, because the instances in themselves are trivial, but the tendencies which they indicate are so dangerous that I have, after careful thought come to the conclusion that they must be placed on record.

The first instance relates to the Republic Day Pageant Parade, about which recently I sent a communication to the Defence Minister himself saying that when this parade, the period-soldiers was seen by the public, they particularly notice that almost all the martial classes of India were represented with just one exception, that of the Sikhs. In the communication I said, and I am quoting:

* Lok Sabha Speech on March 2, 1965.

"A Printed hand-out by the Defence Ministry explained that only the period-soldiers appearing in Indian History upto the 18th century had been included in the Pageant and it was added in the colophon that magnificent Sikhs, as soldiers, appeared in History only in the 19th century."

The communication proceeds :

"Previously, ever since 1962, and earlier, the Ministry of External Affairs of the late Nehru had been consistently asserting in its numerous publications that Ladakh was taken by the Imperial Dogras in 1834, and that the Treaty of Lhasa took place in 1842 between the Emperor of China and Maharaja Gulab Singh of Kashmir. It was after I repeatedly cornered our late Prime minister with contemporary historical documents showing that Ladakh was conquered by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, that the Treaty of Lhasa itself cites that the parties are "the Sikh People," the "Khalsa jio" on one side and the Emperor of China on the other, that the Prime Minister sententiously relented in writing with the observation that "after all Colonel Zorawar Singh (Dogra) was leading these expeditions."

"It might now interest our present Defence Minister to know that as far back as 1609, the first Sikh Militia was recruited by the Sixth Nanak, Guru Hargobind himself, which inflicted a crushing defeat on an imperial Mughal Army at Gurusar (Ferozepur) in which 1200 Sikhs were killed and 6000 Mughal troops including the veteran Mughal General Lalla Beg, the favourite of two Emperors, Jehangir and Shah Jahan. It was in 1707 that the Sikhs, under the incomparable Banda Singh Bahadur, set up their first sovereign Republic, after liberating the heart of northern India, the province of Sirhind. It was on March 29, 1748, that after capturing Jullundur Doab, the Khalsa declared itself a State, and in 1799 Lahore itself was made the capital city of the Sikh Commonwealth.

The Defence Minister and his historians may now prepare a comparative chart of, "the emergence of Maratha soldiery and the rise of Sivaji."

I concluded by saying :

"In George Orwell's '1984', we hear of the Ministry of Truth which alters past History to comply with the ever-changing party moods and behests of the Big brother. Paul Anderson's stories, *The Guardians of Time*, show beautifully how time-travel, retrojection into the past necessitates Time Police to protect History against meddlesome time travellers, but the notion that a thing which once existed might be caused simply and absolutely not to have existed is one which we cannot give a sense to."

To this communication, the Defence Minister has sent me a reply. This reply is in the form of a D.O. letter, dated 24.2.65, in which he says, and I quote :

"For this purpose seven different periods from earlier historical time: to the end of the eighteenth century were chosen. The selection could not be exhaustive and it was not possible to include all warrior classes in the first display."

I have the following observations and comments to make on the reply which the Defence Minister has sent.

My first comment is that the hand-out definitely said that the Sikhs were excluded because they emerged on the historical scene after the period covered i.e. up to the 18th century;

My second comment is that if all "warrior classes" could not be included, would it not have been more tactful and expedient to exclude Marathas instead of the Sikhs ?

My third comment is that if the selection could not be exhaustive, the selection still must have been very meticulously partial since only one class, i. e. the Sikhs, was excluded.

Lastly, I would like to add that in all inclusion and exclusion there is always a basis for selection, whether it is a well informed rule or an unspoken prejudice. If there was a rule, this House has the Right to know what rule it was by which the inclusions and exclusions were made. If the whole affair was regulated through freakish chance, Shri Chavan

owes an explanation in justification of his competence as a Cabinet Minister.

I want to conclude this point by saying that no good can come out of an attempt to write off the Sikhs from the pages of History.

I would like to add that by personal inquiries I am convinced that Shri Chavan himself is perhaps not so parochially inclined as some of his advisers like to make him out to be. I would, therefore, caution him in the interests of national solidarity and in the interests of the good of the nation, to be careful in matters of this kind for they can have very far-reaching consequences.

The Second instance which I want to cite is that of a Short Notice question which I and four or five other honourable members of this House tabled during the last season. This question wanted to know whether there was any substance in the generally spread suspicion that ever since this Defence Minister had taken over this portfolio, there had been some kind of order, written or oral, which necessitated that Rajputs and Sikhs should not be posted to their own regiments and that Maratha officers should invariably be posted to Maratha regiments.

SHRI NARASIMHA REDDY (RAJAMPET) :

Most Unfair

Shri Kapur Singh: This question was rejected by the Defence Minister. Then I wrote to him a letter asking him to let me know what the true state of affairs was, because this suspicion was widespread and it was doing no good to the morale of our armed forces. To that he did not send any reply till I tabled a Cut-Motion on the general defence policy. This reply has now been received by me in the form of a D.O. letter dated 22nd February, 1965 in which he tells me, and I quote :

"I have no hesitation in stating that this has no basis whatever."

He further says that "officers are posted to various regiments of infantry on certain grounds, and that the first posting of an officer is governed by rules." Then he gives four rules. These rules are unexceptionable, and I have no quarrel with them, but at the end of this letter he has added certain statistics. He says that "in the Maratha Regiments the percentage of officers of the same class is only 18.9, i.e. about 19 percent; in the Rajput Regiments this percentage is 18.1, and in the Sikh Regiments this percentage is 36.1." Since the honourable Minister of Defence has taken his stand on statistics. I would like to say something about statistics, because more than one theory is current on this subject. I do not subscribe to the theory that Statistics belong to class of lies which is generally graded as lies, worse kind of lies and Statistics particularly, Government Statistics, but I do favour another definition of the Statistics which states that statistics are like bikinis; they are most exciting in not what they reveal but what they conceal. In the Statistics which he has given, he has not told us as to what was the state of affairs before he took over charge and whether there have been any instructions, written or unwritten, which are responsible for the present state of affairs or for any divergences which have come into existence ever since he took over charge.

Dr. M.S. Aney (Nagpur): Do you dispute the statics given there?

Shri Kapur Singh: No, Sir, I do not dispute the statistics, but I say that these statistics do not meet the point which I had tried to raise. This is the point I am trying to make.

I, therefore, now say that I am perfectly satisfied on the basis of my personal inquiries that the relations between the Maratha officers and their Sikh subordinates in our armed forces are most excellent. Every soldier and every officer whom I have met has told me how considerate and how favourably inclined a Maratha officer is towards the welfare and towards the comforts and towards the interests of the Sikh soldiers.

Shri Ranga : As well as the others.

Shri Kapur Singh : Secondly, there exist very deep and very good historical connections between the Sikh soldiers and the Maratha soldiers. Those links should be strengthened in the interests of not only national unity but in the overall interests of the country which is not faced with extraordinary dangers.

I have brought these two instances on record so that I may be enabled to request Mr. Chavan to make sure that he gives no order, he drops no hint and encourages no tendency which tends directly or indirectly to weaken these links which must be strengthened in the interest of the nation. Thereby I finish my observations on Demand No. 3.

FORCIBLE CAPTURE OF SIKH GIRLS AND WOMEN BY PAKISTAN ARMY PERSONNEL*

Mr. Deputy speaker, Sir, I will be as brief as possible over this painful incident which I wish to place before the House and I expect that you will also bear with me when I am narrating these facts.

Some time ago, when I paid a visit to my constituency, I came into possession of certain facts to the effect that during this recent Indo-Pakistani conflict, in the first week of September, the Pakistani armed personnel pierced into certain villages of India inhabited by Sikhs and carried away about 70 to 80 young girls and women in their trucks. The Indian Army did not make any attempt to rescue them. Some of these women were selected on the way by a Pakistani military post where Pakistani soldiers were staying and they detained eight young girls for the night while other women were taken further into Pakistan. The next morning, some of our Army planes happened to fly over that area and out of fear the occupants of this Pakistani post hid themselves into trenches and taking advantage of that, those Sikh girls tried to run away out of their clutches. This was noticed by our fliers and they tried to give shelter to these eight young girls. Our planes started encircling around them and thus the Pakistanis could not pursue them. These girls ran for about six miles, to cross through the River Sutlej. One of them was drowned and the other 7 girls came back into Indian territory.

* Lok Sabha Speech on November 17, 1965.

I learnt, through the inquiries that I made from the people, that the Government of Punjab had instructions to suppress these facts from the public. I was also told that the Army had been given orders not to take any risk and steps to rescue the women who had thus been captured and taken away to Pakistan. Thereupon, I asked a responsible person of my constituency, Dr. Gurbachan Singh, a retired Assistant Surgeon, to make further inquiries in the case, when I left the constituency, and to let me know what the true facts were.

Dr. Gurbachan Singh is a public man and a retired Government servant and he is a man of high integrity and probity. I read from the letter which he has written to me. I quote :

"Pakistan carried away women about 70 or 80 in number from the following villages, Chooriwala, Beriwal, Jhangra, Pakka of Tehsil Fazilka. There was a military post on the way belonging to Pakistan, a few miles beyond those villages, and they removed 8 girls, one for each man manning that post from that lot and kept them for the night. Next morning our Air Force planes happened to go that side and the men on the post hid themselves in the trenches. The girls escaped in the meantime. Our planes spotted the girls and gave them shelter by encircling round and round till they were out of the danger zone. All the girls swam across the river and saved themselves but one got drowned."

I am placing this letter along with its cover on the Table of the House.

Now, on the basis of this I wanted to raise a discussion in this House by way of giving a Call-Attention Notice. But a Starred Question was admitted instead and even this was not answered on the floor of the House and a written reply has been sent to me which is as follows :

"According to inquiries made by the Government of Punjab a number of families (I want the House to mark the words "a number of families") of villages, Jhangar and Pukka

Chishti, situated close to the Indo-Pakistan border in the Fazilka Sector, are missing since 6th September, when the villages were attacked by the Pakistani army. Inquiries are being made by the Government of Punjab to ascertain whether they were killed or captured by the Pakistanis or whether they were able to move to other places in India."

On the basis of this, I want to raise a discussion on three specific points :

1. Equivocation and evasiveness of the Government of India and their agents in the Punjab in this matter of grave concern to the entire country, including the Sikh people.
2. Responsibility of the Defence Minister of India arising out of failure to save these unfortunate women.
3. Jural and criminal liability of Pakistan authorities in the matter.

About the first point, I merely say that it is either gross incompetence or criminal equivocation on the part of the Punjab Government and the Government of India to take up the position they have taken, as evidenced by the reply given to my question on the 15th November. Surely, they know what is known to thousands of persons in the Punjab as true; if they do not, they are not fit to govern and if they do and are anxious to conceal it from the people, then they are worse than cowards.

Recently at Amritsar and Ludhiana, our dynamic Minister of Home Affairs went out of his way to make statements to the effect that creation of a Sikh State in North India was inconceivable. I do not know whom he tried to disillusion or reassure, but I say on the floor of this House with the utmost sense of responsibility at my command that there is not a single Sikh who wants to create a Sikh state either in the North or elsewhere. I shall disclose here what the Sikhs desire: what they desire is a state governed by honest and decent men and not by cowardly spies and incompetent opportunists.

The fact of the case, now under discussion should make it clear to all level-headed patriots as to what the real grievance of the Sikh people is and why they have been crying all these years without being heard or being understood by the country or this House. I say nothing more on this point.

Coming to the second point relating to responsibility of the Defence Minister, Mahabharata should be so well known to him that I need hardly recapitulate as what was the basic cause of that fearful holocaust, sanctioned by the God-man, Krishna himself. This war took place to avenge a woman wantonly dishonoured.

I would remind him, without going to Mahabharata, of modern times of the Third battle of Panipat the dust of which battle - field our Defence Minister put on his forehead last year when he visited that place. It was the 14th January, 1761, when Marathas faced the Afghan invader, Ahmed Shah Abdali from which battle the Rajputs stood aloof, the Jats were insulted out and to which the Sikhs were never invited.

Nevertheless, the Sikhs arranged supplies to Marathas as best as they could, but they also did something more, to which I draw particular attention of our Defence Minister.

When this battle was lost, it was one of the most unfortunate events of Indian history. When this battle was lost, as the historians tell us, about 5,000 Maratha women of the highest Brahmin caste and of princely classes fell into the hands of Abdali. He stayed there at Panipat for many weeks and he made this specific offer that, if proper ransom could be given to rescue those women, he was prepared to let them go. Nobody came forward with ransom. And then these women were taken by the invader to Afghanistan. When the Sikhs came to know of it, and although they were not well organized, they fell upon the invader at the river crossing at Goindwal of Beas river and rescued as many as 2,200 young women. The Khalsa horsemen delivered each Maratha sister safely to her home in Maharashtra, thousands of miles away.

The women rode all the way on their horses while the Sikhs were content to walk alongside.

In European equivalences it means, Germans rescuing Russian women from Saracans in Paris and restoring them in Moscow.

Cunningham, in his History, calls it as "the greatest act of chivalry in the East." Perhaps, it is the greatest act of chivalry in the word's History. I shall now quote authorities in support of what I have said, briefly, so that any Member who wants to check up these facts may know them from original authorities.

Shri Bade : It is inconceivable that so many Maratha women did go to Panipat.

Shri Kapur Singh : The authorities are as follows :

James Brown's *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sikhs*, London, published in 1788, vol. II, p. 22. Kanhaiya Lal's *Tarikh-i-Punjab* (Urdu), Lahore, Published in 1881, pp 102-113, Gyani Gyan Singh's *Shamshir-i-Khalsa* (Punjabi), published in Amritsar in 1911 p. 145. This is my answer to the insinuations which have been raised by my honourable friend, Mr. Bade as to how such things could have happened. If all these world renowned historians are lying, then I too am lying.

Now, I ask our Defence Minister: "Has he acted in this case, in keeping with the highest military traditions of India?" Let him answer this question for himself.

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER : SURELY NOT

Shri Kapur Singh : Coming to the last point, namely, the accountability and culpability of Pakistan, I would submit that there is the legal aspect and there is the cultural aspect of the matter. As we know, the rules of war are codified in the Geneva and Hague Conventions and they permit a belligerent to exercise certain extraordinary powers beyond those which a State enjoys in peace. These include power to invade and occupy enemy territory, to destroy enemy armed forces and

to requisite and confiscate certain types of enemy property etc. The exercise of these powers is considered as 'military necessities'. But the capture and carrying away of enemy's women for purposes of criminal assault, is just plain barbarism and contrary to all international laws and practices.

Now, I come to the cultural aspect. When Guru Gobind Singh, the modern Lawgiver of the Hindu race was asked as to why he strictly forbade capture and dishonouring of women of the enemy in war, particularly when Muslim practices favoured it, his reply was:

Hindu dharma raakheh ham jag mein, chalen chalaavain
Sikhi mag men.

ਹਿੰਦੂ ਧਰਮ, ਰਾਖਹਿ ਹਮ ਜਗ ਮੇਂ। ਚਲੇ ਚਲਾਵੇਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਮਗ ਮੇਂ।

That is, "Our mission is to preserve Hindu values of life and to make them prevail throughout the world, this is Sikhism."

When countered with the wisdom of the ancients *Visham vishasya aushadhic shatham shaathe samaacharit i. e.* 'Poison alone can counteract poison, and therefore, destroy the evil man through his own evil techniques'. the Guru rejoined :

ham le jaanan panth uhere.

ਹਮ ਲੇ ਜਾਨਣ ਪੰਥ ਉਚੇਰੇ,

adhogati kau nahin pahunchaavan.

ਅਧੋਗਤੀ ਕਉ ਨਾਹੀਂ ਪਹੁੰਚਾਵਨ।

That is, "we have come to raise men to higher moral planes and not to drag them lower down," and he added : "As for women whether yours or of the enemy, remember always the precept of our ancestors, which is contained in the *Manusmriti*, namely :

Yatra naaryah pujayante ramanatra tatra devatah.

That is 'Where women are honoured, there alone gods come to dwell!'

So, revenge and retaliation in kind being out of question,

so far as India is concerned, may I, with your permission, Sir, say a few words to Field Marshal Ayub Khan and to Commander-in-chief, General Musa of Pakistan, "is my feeble voice can now pierce the thick walls of hatred and misunderstanding raised between Delhi and Rawalpindi?" There are a large number of men in India who have known President Ayub during pre-partition days. By then, he is held in high esteem as a decent friendly and God-fearing man, and despite all that has happened during recent years we cannot believe that capture and carrying away of Sikh women, or, indeed, any civilian who-soever, has his approval. Gen. Musa is a Punjabi Jat and has tribal kinship with many of us. It is unnecessary for me to tell him how we feel about what his soldiers have done in this matter. I merely say this to the Field Marshall and to the gallant General that, long after the present conflict and misunderstanding between India and Pakistan is over, long after this sorry chapter in the history of this sub-continent is consigned to the limbo of academic archives, this misdeed of the Pakistan soldiery against the women folk of their neighbours across a political frontier will be remembered and will continue to poison human relationships, I say no more and leave both these gallant soldiers themselves to decide as to what is now proper for them to do.

THE 1961 CENSUS AND PUNJABI SUBA*

Shri Kapur Singh: Chapter III of the report is headed 'Political', in which there is sub-para at page 60 which relates to the setting up of a Punjabi-speaking State. Para 51 of the report on the subject is naturally not up to date for it could not contain a reference to the latest step in the process, which is the announcement made a few days ago here, that is, on the 18th April, 1966 about the setting up of a demarcation agency on the basis of 1961 census figures on language. This latest step in the process was preceded as this House knows, and as we know, by the Cabinet committee formed on the subject which came to the conclusion that a Punjabi speaking State should be carved out of the existing Punjab. It was followed by the Report of the Parliamentary Committee on the Punjabi Suba which recommended inter alia the conversion of the Punjabi region, specified in the First Schedule to the Punjab Regional Committees Order, 1957. The last step-I am referring to the announcement of the 18th April-namely the announcement, would seem to bypass the well-considered recommendations of the Parliamentary Committee and in a way also bypass the Presidential determination of the issue made in 1957 both of which decisions had found a large measure of acceptance by the public and politicians.

The question of interest here is as to how the latest announcement of the 18th April spells out the future of the Punjabi Suba which is going to be established as a result of

* Note : Excerpt from a speech delivered on April 27, 1966 on the Motion on Demands for Grants, Ministry of Home Affairs.

so much that has happened in the country during the last fifteen years. There is no time to go into any elaborate arguments or details but certain basic facts must be brought on record. These basic facts are : (a) No honest student of Indian Politics will deny that the basic group of Indian Politics and in Indian history has been and is the communal group, the group congealed into an entity by history and other circumstances, and (b) No well-informed politician can be ignorant of the fact that during the past decades language in this country has been the banner for political power and security for the communal group and it is not accepted as an objective demographic characteristic. That is why in the Pre-Partition days as well as now Government authorities have had to discard and disregard, more than once, the linguistic statistics obtained during the census operations as non-objective and false. It happened in 1939 in the United Punjab, and it happened in 1950, after the Partition, in respect of the North of India.

The 1961 census figures on language in Punjab reflect the power relations between Hindus and Sikhs and do not reflect the numbers of Hindi Speaking and Punjabi Speaking groups.

No special pleading or casuistry can obliterate this fundamental fact. These figures of 1961 census do not relate to linguistic group but they relate to communal groups.

Shri A.P. Sharma (Buxar) : No, no.

Shri Kapur Singh : This can only be denied either through ignorance or through lack of the honesty. Anybody who knows the facts knows what I am saying is true.

Any attempt to carve out a unilingual Punjabi State by making these linguistic figures as the basis, can only result in carving out a Sikh area, out of the existing Punjab which forms a political quarantine for the Sikhs in India.

Whatever the protestations and pretexts and protests have already started coming in from some Members of the House - the net result of this kind of demarcation can only be

a communal and not a linguistic administrative arrangement within a secular Indian nation. Whatever else may be the consequences of such an arrangement, it cannot lead to an integrated coherent and pacified region in the North of India. It can only lead to sharpening of the communal confrontations which we loudly pretend to disown and eschew.

It can lead to the type of dishonesty or ignorance which the hon'ble Member for Amroha exhibited in his speech here on the 15th March, 1966 in the debate on the General Budget. He said, while referring to the decision for setting up a Punjabi State, that it was tantamount to raising of a "bogey." I have looked into the dictionary and the meaning of the word is, "the devil". He spelt out this devil by saying that:

"There are districts in the Punjab which are predominately Hindi-speaking. There are other districts which are predominately Punjabi-speaking. In the middle the population is mixed, speaking both Hindi and Punjabi."

"How are you going to divide this State?", he sanctimoniously asks. What he means with his tongue in his cheek of-course is that whatever demarcations you make, the Hindus shall claim Hindi as their mother-tongue and Sikhs alone shall be left out as champions of Punjabi and so, even the unilingual Punjabi State shall continue to be a bilingual State; a predicament the Sikhs want to avoid.

I ask the following questions plainly, and therefore, I expect that the Minister will give plain answer to them: Is the real purpose of accepting the 1961 census as the basis of demarcation of a Punjabi speaking state that is, on paper, unilingual Punjabi State? Or, is the real object merely to detach Chandigarh, Anandpur Sahib, Bhakra and Pathankot the bridge-head to Kashmir, from a state in which the Sikhs might form a majority?

Let there be clear answers to these questions.

The steps which are now being taken to demarcate a Punjabi State out of the existing Punjab-which you, Sir

recommended as the only just solution of the problem in North India in your ably written report, are in fact the steps which will lead to national disintegration. According to a Persian saying :

*tarsam keh b-kaaba na rasi arbi inrah keh tu mi-ravi
b-turkistan ast.*

ਤਰਸਮ ਕਹਿ ਬ-ਕਾਬਾ ਨਾ ਰਸੀ ਅਰਬੀ ਇਨਰਾਹ ਕਹਿ ਤੂ ਮੀ-ਰਵੀ ਬ-ਤੁਰਕਿਸਤਾਨ
ਅਸਤ ।

It means : O pilgrim, I have grave doubts about your arriving at your destination, for the road you have taken leads elsewhere.

It is possible that I may be misreading the intentions of the Home Ministry. It is possible that those who are responsible for this kind of demarcation of a unilingual Punjabi State have something quite different in their minds. By using the secular context of our Constitution, they might, in fact, be trying to solve, what is called the Sikh problem. It is possible that although they protest that they are carving out a Punjabi speaking State, in their hearts they believe they are going to give the Sikhs some political arrangements wherein they can "breathe the air of freedom." These are the words from a certain assurance given by our late Prime Minister, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, in March 1947. If this is the case then I would beg permission to place the whole matter in its clear and prophet perspective.

It is necessary to understand a couple of fundamental propositions before this kind of approach to the Sikh problem can be evaluated.

The first proposition is that in the memorandum which the Akali Legislators of the Punjab Legislative Assembly submitted to the Parliamentary Committee on the Punjabi Suba, it is stated as follows in the last paragraph :

"The question of formation of a unilingual Punjabi Suba has nothing to do whatsoever, directly with any political demands, rights or aspirations of the Sikhs, as a people, and

its formation or otherwise does not affect the Sikh problem one way or the other, in any direct manner."

This is very clear, very forthright, and a very unambiguous statement of the true position. By trying to solve the Sikh problem by carving out a unilingual Punjabi State on the 1961 census figures, you will not either be meeting the case of the Sikhs or solving the Sikh problem, directly, one way or the other. If, therefore, this is the real object then it is not only a waste of time, but a misdirection of energy.

The second fundamental proposition which must be in mind in this context is that the Sikh problem or demand does not arise of the provisions of the Constitution Act of India, but is of a more of fundamental origin. The Sikh demand for having an area demarcated in the North of India where they can "also breathe the air of freedom" has its genesis in certain fundamental facts of the political evolution of its constitutional history. They are :

(a) A fundamental fact is that the basic political group has been and remains the communal, and not the secular political group, as is presumed by the framers of the Constitution of India.

(b) In the Statement of the Cabinet Mission of 1946, the Sikhs were recognized by the British Sovereign Power as the third party entitled to inheritance of the British political sovereignty in India.

(c) In the Statement made by His Majesty's Government on 3rd June, 1947, the Sikhs were given the decisive voice to decide as to whether or not Punjab should be partitioned.

(d) The Sikhs exercised the right in favour of partition of the Punjab, to opt out for the Constituent Assembly of India in which the centre was to have powers only on Finance, Communication and Defence.

(e) In March, 1947, Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru, as president of the All India Congress Party, gave a public undertaking to the Sikhs that an area in the North of India shall be carved out, in which "the Sikhs may also breathe the air of freedom."

(f) In the Constituent Assembly of free India, however, a Constitution was framed which repudiated the foregoing fundamental facts and undertakings.

(g) As a consequence, representatives of the Akalis to the Constituent Assembly, refused to append their signatures to the Constitution Act.

This is the true Sikh problem in its true perspective and this in fact is the essence of the demand for a Punjabi Suba, which was not meant to be equated with a unilingual Punjabi State. The term "Suba" is a Mughal administrative term which implies an autonomous State, such as the States of USSR, and the sub-state of Quebec in Canada.

This is the true and correct perspective of the Sikh problem, and any attempt towards solving it in any underhand manner, by bringing in the 1961 census figures as the basis of a Punjabi-speaking State cannot but lead to conflicts and frustrations more than it seeks to solve.

This is where, I would like to leave this matter, I beg of you to show me your customary indulgence so that I may finish my remarks. I will not take many minutes more.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath : If my learned friend will not mind a slight interruption, on a point of clarification I would like to know whether he identifies the proposed Punjabi Suba with a Sikh State. What is his attitude to this? I do not think it was the Parliamentary Committee's stand at all that it should be a Sikh State.

Shri Kapur Singh : I think I have clarified my point, and I will try to recapitulate it with a view to answer the question which has just now been raised. The position which I am trying to explain to this House is that the demand for a Sikh State is entirely a different demand in origin and content and the demand for a unilingual Punjabi State is an altogether different demand. Our Government within the context of our Constitution, is conceding the demand for a unilingual Punjabi State but they are taking certain steps now, and I have

referred to one step, namely the announcement of 18th April which might create an impression that by an underhand method an attempt is being made to meet the second demand while it is pretended that the first demand, namely the linguistic demand, is being met. I am therefore, issuing a warning that this kind of procedure will lead to all kinds of troubles which would be harmful to the unity, integration and strength of this country of this nation, to which I and all the other Sikhs are wedded.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath : Let us preserve and promote Hindu - Sikh unity at all costs, by all means.

Shri Kapur Singh : I am entirely with the hon'able Member that at all costs Hindu-Sikh unity should be promoted and this is precisely the point I am trying to make out, that the Home Ministry, by their tactics, are trying to undermine that unity by creating an impression that they are carving out a Sikh quarantine State for the Sikh people. This will not do good at all to the country or the nation or the Hindus or the Sikhs. That is my point.

THE SIKH SITUATION AFTER DEATH OF MASTER TARA SINGH*

Master Tara Singh's death, at the ripe old age of 82, has removed from the Sikh world, a person who not only dominated its politics for many decades but who also has been instrumental in putting up firm tracks over which the future politics of the Sikhs must move, for many decades to come. He was as much a product of the times that threw him up and through which he moved, as he was a representative of the historical impulses that have shaped the Sikh people and animated them during the last five hundred years. His failures are more obvious and numerous than his achievements for, he was, by and large, a non-achiever, but his significant success lies precisely in this that he showed a remarkable perceptiveness of the true destiny of the Sikh people, the Panth, in the history of India and by implication, in the history of the world, and in his own way, persisted against the current of the times to hold a not defined image of this destiny before his people, and the world.

2. What is the shape and content of this destiny? And how did he try to spell it out? What does this destiny signify in the modern world-context and the current situation in our country? These are the most fundamental and truly urgent questions for the Sikhs to consider now.

3. In some ways, the origin and rise of Sikhism in India

* A paper read at the Convention of Sikh Intelligensia held at Chandigarh on the 23rd December, 1967.

is a unique phenomenon in the history of the world. New religions arise to give expression to peculiar spiritual yearnings of a people in a given geographical or historical context. They arise to meet political and social problems consequent upon new impacts of changed economies and centres of exercise of power. They arise for purposes of synthesis and reconciliation between cultures hitherto strangers to each other, Sikhism is in some measure, all these, but also something more. It arose out of a violent and apparently irreconcilable clash between the cultures of semitic Islam and Aryan Hinduisim, and a life-and-death struggle on the battlefield of political conflict, between two incompatible social orders and systems of social ethics. It aimed at meeting the challenge where the question of basic human values was involved. This was the essence of the war-cry of Sikhism to the effect that, "Dharma shall be saved and Hinduism preserved, for, this is precisely meant by establishment of Sikhism".

ਹਿੰਦੂ, ਧਰਮ, ਰਾਖਹਿ ਹਮ ਜਗ ਮੇਂ। ਚਲੇਂ ਚਲਾਵੇਂ ਸਿੱਖੀ ਮਗ ਮੇਂ।

Hindu, Dharam, Rakheh hum jag mein. Chalen chalaven
Sikhi mag mein.

Simultaneously, it aimed at calling upon the traditional Hinduism and militant Islam to arise above their respective particularities into a heaven of higher and purer understanding of their respective faiths so as to perceive the essential unity that underlies and sustains them. In addition, Sikhism eventually evolved a political society for the purpose of implementing these basic aims, through creation of political arrangements in the north of India, and in India as a whole, and other regions where necessary. These political arrangements are to ensure that conflicts and tragic consequences, such as clash of Hinduism and Islam gave rise to on the soil of India, are eliminated in future, in a new Indian nation based on tolerant plural societies, and guided and served by the Khalsa. Such a nation then, must become an exemplar for other nations of the world, thus facilitating the

emergence of a World Society and a World Government. It is in this sense, that the Sikh congregations, during centuries past, throughout the world, have daily chanted the litany :

ਰਾਜ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਆਕੀ ਰਹੇ ਨ ਕੋਇ ।

ਖੁਆਰ ਹੋਇ ਸਭ ਮਿਲੇਗੇ ਬਚੇ ਸਰਨ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ ।

It is in view of this peculiar and unique *elan* and ethos of Sikhism and Khalsa, that the famous historian, Arnold Toynbee, in his History of the World, asserts that the Communist Party of Lenin was not a unique and altogether new phenomenon in the history of the world, as Lenin claimed, but that its true prototype was the "Hindu" Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh.

4. During the four decades, two decades of pre-1947 and two decades of post 1947, that Master Tara Singh occupied the central position in the Sikh politics, most momentous changes have occurred in the political and psychological history of India. If the spiritual upheavals and stirrings of political awareness of the Hindus in the decades before the year 1947 are carefully analysed it becomes clear that the topmost Hindu leaders of thought and action were overwhelmed with two passions and aims, to realise which the entire Hindudom acted in singleness of purpose and with unabated energy. These aims were and have become clear since 1947 after a seriously truncated India fell into their lap: (i) To gather, to capture and to hold all decisive political powers in the hands of the Hindus and for the Hindus, without possibility of an effective challenge, (ii) To devise and enforce such constitutional arrangements and ideological smoke screens as make the fact (i) invisible to the naked eye in terms of the nursery rhyme:

A hungry spider made a web of thread so very fine,

That naked eye could scarcely see the slender little line.

The Muslim leadership of a united India espied this "slender little line" and framed their objectives and attitudes accordingly, but the Sikh leadership showed no better acumen in political understanding here than they have done on several

other occasions. Repeated firm and generous offers made by Muslim leadership to the Sikhs to accept an autonomous Sikh-oriented Punjab, externally integrated to Pakistan, and repeated hints and suggestions by the Britishers guaranteeing secure and effective political status to the Sikh people in their homelands, were summarily and naively rejected by the Sikhs in return for a treacherous assurance by the Congress that the Constitution of a free India shall not be framed except that the Sikhs accept it freely. When however, in 1950 the Constitution Act of India was promulgated, the impotent protests of our true representatives, led by S. Hukam Singh, who now adorns the Governor's *gaddi* in Rajasthan, were contemptuously brushed aside and a *Shaktishali Kendra* for exercise of political power was set up at Delhi with Akali Members of the Constituent Assembly abstaining from affixing their signatures in token of acceptance of the Constitution by the Sikh people.

5. It was in this background that the demand of the Sikhs, led by the Shiromani Akali Dal, arose, for carving out a Punjabi Suba out of the Indian Punjab and its contiguous areas of Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh. Punjabi Suba was a vague and adjustable concept that neither fitted into the Constitution Act as framed, nor militated against its foundations. Master Tara Singh, however, made it repeatedly clear, through his public statements and writings that the Punjabi Suba (i) must be such as gathers up main Sikh-inhabited areas under a single government and (ii) it must guarantee and ensure a status and political power to the Sikh people that recognises and establishes them as co-equals of the ruling community in a united India and within a single Indian nation. This is what he meant whenever he asserted, in more impassioned than precise language, that the Panth must be recognised and treated as a fundamental entity in the political arrangements of India and not as an irrelevant mass of atomised citizens of a so called, secular nation and also that, the Sikhs firmly decline to accept the status of second-rate

citizens in relation to their elder brethren, the Hindus. For this, he was subjected to smear-campaigns of vilification and misrepresentation and he was otherwise persecuted, throughout the last two decades by being labelled as a communalist, an obscurantist, a Pakistan-guided quisling and a mental case and he was also sentenced to terms of imprisonment and detention, almost as many times as the foreign rulers had done in punishment for his fighting the freedom-battle of India.

6. In 1966, the first Prime Minister of India, who virtually killed Master Tara Singh by persuading him to give up his fast-unto-death through treacherous promise, never intended to be kept, and repudiated soon after they had achieved their purpose, was no more on the scene. Other developments of international import had also taken place necessitating some softening of the hard line so far adopted towards the Sikhs. A truncated, moth-eaten ghetto of a unilingual Punjabi state was then carved out but not till a new Sikh leadership and a new group in control of the potent Sikh gurdwaras was placed in the saddle, that proclaims it as an article of their faith that (a) the Sikhs, as a people, are disentitled to have political aspirations or make demands of their own, and (b) the newly established Punjab is wholly grounded in a language and not in the political aspirations and demands of Sikh people and their instrument—the mystical Khalsa. This leadership further proclaims that it is their firm resolve to fight and destroy all trends and forces that cling to the original aims and objectives of the Khalsa which are contrary to the above mentioned lines of their policy. Thus leadership and school of thought then actively endeavours to pursue policies that cannot but negate the pristine Sikh impulses, nullify the historical achievements of the Khalsa during the last two centuries and more, and liquidate the unique and most remarkable political society, ever set up hitherto, in the history of mankind namely the Khalsa. Never was such a satanic conspiracy hatched against the Sikhs in the past, except, during the first half of the

eighteenth century when, a class of Sikhs, called Hindalias, set up their headquarters at Jandiala, near Amritsar, under the leaderships of one Harbhagat, styled as Niranjanias.

They constructed a fake Golden Temple and tank, prepared an apocryphal *Janamsakhi* of Guru Nanak, and proclaimed that the true destiny of Sikhism was to act as a catalyst for converting ever-increasing larger numbers of Hindus to Islam so that India may be converted into a true Dar-ul-Islam, an Islamic State and Society. About these Sikhs, the contemporary Muslim writers state that they even practised circumcision and ritual muslim prayers and fastings. Our ancestors, confronted with this mortal challenge, resolved that the first priority was to destroy these Hindalias root and branch and to settle with the Mughal and Pathan empires later on.

7. This, in short, is where we stand today. It is in this background and context that the Shiromani Akali Dal passed its famous resolution of the 20th July, 1966, at Delhi, demanding inter-alia, that (1) the newly carved-out Punjab should be so enlarged as to include in it all the left-out Panjabi areas and establishments, such as, Bhakra Dam, Ganga Nagar District of Rajasthan, Sirsa Tehsil of Hissar district, Ambala Tehsil of Ambala district, and the Una Tehsil of Hoshiarpur district, with certain areas of Karnal district, such as Shahbad, and Rattia Block. (2) For making constitutional arrangements that recognise this enlarged Punjab as the Sikh Homeland and which confer upon it the Powers and status of Jammu & Kashmir, as laid down in the unamended Constitution Act 1950. This resolution further demanded that this Sikh Homeland should be recognised as an integral part of the Union of India, and internally governed by a Constitution framed on modern democratic lines. It was further demanded in the resolution that political arrangements should be provided in the Constitution Act which guarantees effective representation of the Sikhs on legislative, judicial, and executive levels of Governments in the states other than the

Punjab, to ensure that no discrimination can be practised against the Sikhs residing in those areas. It is this demand which has been mischievously misrepresented by a hostile press as a separatist demand, as a demand for a Sovereign Sikh State, and as a demand which is anti-national, anti-Indian, and inspired by the foreign enemies of India.

8. What is the real nature of the, so called, secular Indian Government, manipulated by a strong Centre, deriving its authority from a Parliament elected by a one-head one-vote suffrage? Anybody who has first hand experience of how the Parliament functions and to what invisible pulls and strains it is subjected continuously and effectively, knows that the Parliament in Delhi is an instrument, a true instrument, in the hands of those who think on the lines which determined the Hindu thought and action during the half a century before 1947. Whatever the pretensions and whatever the appearances, true realities of Indian real politik remain unaltered, and this is despite a large number of well-intentioned and patriotic Hindus, who cherish no ill-will towards the Sikhs. Then, there is the Executive in the country which daily implements the laws made by this Parliament. This Executive is saturated with the same biases and attitudes that have moved the Hindu psyche throughout the centuries that they have remained overwhelmed by a militant, conquering Islam. This Hindu psyche is incapable of a correct interpretation of the new world and is profoundly persuaded that a strong and true India can arise only on the ashes of those who do not formally merge themselves into the omnivorous Hindu Society. This nostalgic aspiration is succinctly summed up in the cry of "Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan". A country and a society where the Hindi, that is the Sanskrit based *khari boli*, is not the sole exclusive language of the Government, of diplomacy, of higher thought and culture, is a country and a society which is unacceptable to this Hindu psyche. A country or a society in India which is not composed of those adopting formal

trappings of Hindu way of life, habits of food and dress, of idiom and thought, is totally unacceptable to them, and India, called by whatever name, must be an India, that is, Bharat, in which non-Hindus may live but only on sufferance and as fringe citizens, even though their existence is guaranteed in a Constitution which is more modern than modernity, and which can be defended before any forum of enlightened West European intellectuals. Then a Judicial system, which was established by the British in this country has been transplanted in new free India. This Judicial system has now remained as a transplant on the recipient body of the Hindu Society under a Hindu Government for almost two decades. People who understand these matters are profoundly disturbed at what they see in this Roman jurisprudence and British justice transplanted on the alien soil of India. There are two tests by which it may be judged as to whether the transplant has been rejected by the recipient or has been accepted as integral part of the Hindu psyche. Firstly, in any judicial process, the appeal of the aggrieved citizen, whether against the State or another fellow citizen, is an appeal to God, and not to a political party or a permanent majority in a nation. If those making judgments in judicial forums are not, all the time, poignantly aware of this principle, then it follows that the foreign judicial system has not become an integral part of the nation's way of life. If there exists a special rapport between the judges and the political leaders, or the community to which they belong, then the judicial system, so transplanted, has not been accepted by the recipient body. Secondly, in all judicial pronouncements, the major influence is not fiat but principles which bind the judges and apply consistently among all men. If interpretation of law is different from man to man, and the legal relief to be allowed depends upon the face of the individual, and not upon the legal principles, then the inference is that, the transplant has been rejected by the recipient body. Those who have carefully watched this aspect of our national life, are not free from grave and serious

apprehensions as to the future of the foreign judicial system in India. For the Sikhs it is a question of life and death, and it is for this reason that a resolution of the 20th July, 1966, passed at Delhi by the Shiromani Akali Dal, has formally recorded its impression that so far as the Sikhs are concerned, the judicial process of the country cannot be implicitly relied upon for redress of grievances or protection against discrimination.

9. Apart from the Legislature, the Judiciary and the Executive, there is another power in the State, which is called, the Press, and allied means of mass-communication, such as, Radio and Television. These are either state monopolies, or virtual monopolies in the hands of members of the majority. There are not a few Sikhs, who are sorely grieved at the treatment meted out to them in this quarter through misrepresentation as well as through suppression of news.

10. Recently, after much unseemly excitement, the Official Languages Bill has been enacted in our Parliament and the ruling Akalis, in accordance with the programme of their Akali Dal, have accepted Hindi, in advance, as the sole link-language of the Union. As already said, Hindi is not a mere language; it is more a symbol and banner of the parochial Hindu psyche that brooks neither rivals nor co-existence. From purely Sikh point of view, Hindi's supremacy in the state affairs is culturally undesirable, administratively disastrous and politically disintegrating. Hindi is a reaction, against all that Sikhism basically stands for, and communal tolerance and administrative efficiency are bound to be the first casualties in the process of establishing primacy of Hindi in India, not even familiar to those who claim to speak it. It is bound to de-link us from the modern technological progress, constrict our mental horizon and otherwise isolate us from that which is universal and forward looking. Just as Guru Gobind Singh enjoined upon the Sikhs to attain proficiency in Sanskrit in order to identify themselves with the cultural morals of India, and to study Persian for understanding the central Asian

thought and mastering skills in international diplomacy of the day, for precisely these reasons, I am persuaded, that the Sikhs must learn English language, which is going to be the language of international Sikhism as a world religion and which is the language of modern technology and higher world-culture. The Sikhs must put their weight on the side of those who advocate retention of English as the link language of India.

11. In short, it is plain to any honest and intelligent Sikh that unless the situation changes fundamentally, and suitable arrangements are made to ensure Sikhs a proper existence and proper future in India, the Sikhs are bound to be first pushed out of the main stream of Indian history, and then made to disappear from the historical scene, altogether.

12. To such a predicament no self-respecting Sikh can submit, whatever the odds and whatever the consequences for spelling out this position aloud. The Sikhs are History makers and they are determined to remain so, no matter what the others have planned for them. The Sikhs are a living people knit into a political organisation, the Khalsa, and they have no intention of going under simply because these others view the current situation and realities otherwise. The Sikhs shall make the greatest mistake of their life if they accept the position of becoming mere camp-followers of those who made the division of indivisible India a possibility, and those who proclaim that a nation can be artificially manufactured out of half baked theories extracted from the 19th century history of Western Europe. A nation does not spring forth from the earth as a mushroom after a rain. It must struggle as a banyan tree against wintry winds and dry spells. A nation is not produced out of the corpses of living and pulsating organisms, and a nation is not built through intellectual arrogance and spivvery. The Khalsa cannot lend itself to be used in a self-defeating process of this kind. The Khalsa shall never accept or submit to the position that technology, with its attitudes and values, is a sufficient culture or that preoccupation with industrial

production and economic goals can satisfy all humane dimensions of life and can replace religion as the supreme concern of man. The Khalsa shall uphold the banner of Dharma, the banner of Freedom for everybody, the banner of establishing tolerant, plural societies and the banner of peace and mutual understanding among men, so that the entire mankind may progress and prosper.

13. For achievements of these goals, the Gurus and our ancestors have already laid down the political programme for the Sikh people. This political programme, we repeat every morning and evening in our congregations :

ਦੇਗ ਭੇਗ ਫਤਹ, ਪੰਥ ਕੀ ਜੀਤ, ਧਰਮ ਕਾ ਨੈਕਾਰ, ਖਾਲਸੇ ਜੀ ਕੇ ਬੋਲ ਬਾਲੇ।

"May the mankind progress on the road to recurring victories and ever-expanding affluence. May the Sikhs remain free and sovereign. May the Righteousness prevail everywhere and for evermore. May the Panth be respected and recognised amongst the nations of the world." There is no other Sikh programme.

14. In the light of these observations, I say that, the destiny of the Sikhs in India is to procure an autonomous Sikh Homeland within Indian Union, so as to be able to make their full contribution in the interests of integrity of the country and unity of the nation. In the event, however, of circumstances so changing as to require it, it is the destiny of the Sikhs to take up the task of reconstruction of India, where it was left in the first half of the 19th century. In full awareness of this destiny, let the Sikhs unite and march forward with a firm resolve to fight enshrined in their hearts and the Name of God on their lips:

ਪੰਨ ਜੀਓ ਤਿਹ ਕੋ ਜਗ ਮੈ ਮੁਖ ਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਚਿੱਤ ਮੈ ਜੁਧ ਬਿਚਾਰੈ।

(ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ)

Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh.

RAJ KAREGA KHALSA

On the 20th July, 1975, a Government, sponsored, All Communities' Convention was held at Patiala to chalk out a programme for the ter-centenary celebrations of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, addressing which the nonagenarian venerable Sardar Bahadur, Bhai Jodh Singh, ex-Vice-Chancellor of the Patiala University, exhorted the audience, as the Daily Tribune, Chandigarh of the next morning tells us, that,

1. "In celebration of Guru's martyrdom, a vigorous campaign should be launched against the wrong belief that State Power was necessary to sustain any religion. Politics, he emphasised, must be insulated from religion."

2. This declaration of Bhai Jodh Singh was apparently somewhat irrelevant for the occasion but not so in its underwater ice-berg base which is always much more substantial and dangerous than the visible apex.

3. It is not generally appreciated that :

(i) Bhai Jodh Singh has been an active politician during the British as well as the post-British period under the guise of a religious man and he has never deemed it fit to insulate his own politics from his religion, with the result that grateful and appreciative foreign rulers conferred upon him the high distinction and title of Sardar Bahadur in addition to other tokens of favour, and in the post-British period also he has been in much demand by those in political power.

(ii) A clear-headed person that Bhai Jodh Singh is, he does not say, in so many words that, 'insulation of politics from religion' is a definite Sikh doctrine; he merely proffers

it as his own piece of secular and pagan wisdom, for he is aware that Sikh doctrine and tradition both hold politics as isolated from religion as pedagogy, opportunism and unprincipled trickery. Only by implication and through insinuation he desires that the Sikhs should accept the views of those whose voice he is that, such, indeed, is the true Sikh doctrine.

(iii) The British who subjugated the Sikhs and throughout remained in terror of them as well as held them in manly admiration, secretly desired that the Sikhs should remain somewhat obscure about the true Sikh doctrine embodied in their shrill historical and fundamental cry of 'liberty of death'-*Raaj karaain ikk bar mar hain* (ਰਾਜ ਕਰਾਏਂ ਇਕ ਬਾਰ ਮਰ ਹੈ) (Unexpurgated *Prachin Panth Prakash*), and there can be no doubt that, by them Bhai Jodh Singh was found as a useful ally.

(iv) The current rulers of India even have not made any secret of their desire and determination to wean the Sikhs away from the core-teachings of their Gurus that, the Sikhs cannot fulfil their divine spiritual and social assignments without their own base of political power and that for a Sikh to insulate politics from religion is an un-utterably abominable degradation and fall from grace.

4. It is in this background that the Patiala performance of Bhai Jodh Singh has to be critically examined.

5. Bhai Jodh Singh's singularly unfortunate Patiala utterance, namely, that, (a) It is a wrong belief that State-power is necessary to sustain any religion, Sikhism included, (b) that this 'wrong belief' deserves to be dispelled through a high-priority effort integrated with the religious projects and organised plans of the Sikhs, and (c) that Politics must be insulated from Religion, altogether which he insinuates is the true Sikh position, are altogether unsustainable, and the revered Bhai took a most undue advantage by publicising his own credo from a platform of Sikh religion and he also

proceeded to enjoin upon the Sikhs his debatable personal opinions as an integral part of Sikhism.

6. The Sikh position on the all-time tantalising questions of (1) Politics versus Religion, (2) State power and Sikhism, and (3) Political sovereignty and the practice of Sikh religion, is unambiguously codified in the litany song daily in all free Sikh congregations ever since the passing away of Guru Gobind Singh (1707), the litany being *Srimukh-vaak*, "the very blessed words" of the Guru Himself :

Raj karega Khalsa aaki rahe na koe.

ਰਾਜ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਆਕੀ ਰਹੇ ਨਾ ਕੋਇ।

khwar hoe sabh milenge bache saran jo hoe.

ਖਵਾਰ ਹੋਇ ਸਭ ਮਿਲੇਂਗੇ ਬਚੇ ਸਰਨ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ।

"The Sikh people shall remain free and sovereign, always non-challenging this position, all every one must eventually accept this position. No matter how unpalatable and bitter it to them, be. And behold, peace and safety is in such a concession, or submission."

7. This *startingly* tall and audacious claim has been publicly proclaimed by the Sikh people during the last three centuries, firmly and definitely and it has moved many to sheer ridicule, others to fright, still others to resentment and boiling-heat anger, many Sikhs themselves to chicken-hearted craven-fear or shameless apologia and the political Hindus of the post-1947 euphoria, it has, almost invariably moved to greater contempt for those whom they see as already in their death-throes.

8. Be that as it may, it is legitimate to examine as to whether the Sikh doctrine itself is devoid of historical perceptiveness and realistic out-look, and whether it stands the test of scientific scrutiny. Thus alone its intrinsic validity can be judged, however unpalatable or *prima-facie* impracticable it might otherwise appear in the case of present day Sikh people, politically subjugated, culturally submerged, intellectually confused and barren, morally decayed,

economically deprived and plundered through the partition of India and religiously profaned, it can not be, off-hand asserted or insinuated that this Sikh doctrine is *prima facie* ill-conceived or stupid or unsustainable.

9. Let us glance through the World History, ever since well defined and locatable civilizations have emerged and we find that there have always been, at any given period, one or two nations, peoples, which were leading *raj-jati*, characterised by the ethos of, Raj Karega Khalsa, who were admired and were tacitly imitated by others. There is no exception known to this rule.

10 This phase of leadership, political or moral or both, has passed from one nation to another in rotation, and in historical times, no nation has yet enjoyed it twice whether such is some hard and fast law of History cannot be asserted.

11. By way of illustration, might be mentioned, the early Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians under Achaemenid dynasty from 550 B.C. to 330 B.C. But the Greeks are the earliest who still seem to live in the thoughts of the Western man today, just as the Confucian China does in its "barbarian" periphery and the Hindus in the Buddhist, Far East and Southeast Asia. A remarkable aspect of the Greek leadership was that it never took the political form of a single empire except for a very few years in the life-time of Alexander of Macedon. Owing to a variety of circumstances, local accidental, the empire broke up at his death, but Greek dynasties, Greek thoughts and Greek methods of war, nevertheless, dominated a large part of the world for three centuries and more.

12. Greek eminence gave way to Roman, Roman ideas, Roman fashion and Roman armies held undisputed leadership for some four centuries. Roman concepts of imperial domination and organisation and Roman ethos of social insularity were strictly observed and practised by the British rulers of India. Up to the end of Nehru regime even in a free India, these Roman concepts held sway in our governmental

atmosphere, through WOGS-Westernised Oriental Gentlemen, the I.C.S. men and Nehruite politicians.

13. After about two centuries of confusion, Arabs appeared on the World-stage as the International leaders, sustaining the most powerful empire of their time from A.D. 650 to A.D. 850. After the commencement of their political decline they remained the leaders in thought and science for five hundred years more.

14. When the Arabic-speaking people fell behind, they had already passed on the torch of art, learning, Science and Industry to western Europe. Here the lead was first assumed by the Holy Roman Empire, then by Spain, France and Britain in that order.

15. In our own life-time, we have witnessed the leadership moving on to the United States of America and Russia.

16. Certain general laws as operative in the field of international leadership, are clearly seen to emerge.

17. Firstly, there is always an element of strength involved. Whether or not the great nation imposes its military rule by military conquest and occupation, it is always power that produces imitation. France did not conquer a vast territory in the 17th and 18th centuries, yet French became the diplomatic language of the world. French instructors were engaged to train the armies of other nations as in the case of the Sikhs in the first half of the 19th century, and French furniture, French literature and the French cooking were everywhere supreme.

18. In our own life-time, the U.S.A. has not imposed military occupation on many nations, yet American slang, American clothes, American music, the horribly noisy concupiscent jazz, the American architecture of crazy skyscrapers have spread all over the world. Herein lies the true explanation of over 90% Sikh migrants to the U.S.A., Canada, British Isles and Western Europe, unashamedly falling in for the ugly unaesthetic, barbarous fashion of clean-shaven faces and the pernicious, unclean habit of smoking.

while the Sikh migrants to the African continent and the Southeast Asian regions have retained their Sikh dignity of uncut hair and healthy and sensible abhorrence of smoking upto recent times.

19. We can scarcely claim that this is due to the fact that they, the U.S.A. culture-patterns, are intrinsically better than anything which could be produced anywhere else.

20. There is obviously something in human nature which causes us to immitate the thought and mannerisms of those who are physically strong and it was to this secret that Guru Gobind Singh drew mankind's attention when he declared that, "In this world of phenomenon, everything is covered and controlled by the Time-sword, and men tend to lean on the mightiest."

ya jag main sabh kal kirpan ke

ਜਾ ਜਗ ਮੇ ਸਭ ਕਲ ਕਿਰਪਾਨ ਕੇ

bhari bhujan kau bhari bhrose.¹

ਭਾਰੀ ਭੁਜਾਨ ਕਉ ਭਾਰੀ ਭਰੋਸੇ ॥

21. How else can we explain the back-sliding of almost 80 lacs of Sikhs in 1849, to a mere 18 lacs of Sikhs in the Census of 1862 ? What explains, if not decay of political power and might of the Sikhs in 1850, the conversion of Raja Sir Harman Singh and Sadhu Sunder Singh to Christianity, the conversion to Islam of the learned *ulema*, Obeidullah Sindhi, and the father and family of internationally-famous jurist, Sir Mohd. Zaffar-Ullah Khan ? What made the scion of the martyr Bhai Mati Das, the late Bhai Parmanand, his son and son-in-law, and the uniquely vital off-spring of a devout *sahajdhari* Sikh family, Dr Sir Gokal Chand Narang break away from the gravitational orbit of Sikhism and stray unto the barren wastelands of Arya Samaj ? Again during the short historical span of their existence, the Sikhs have seen much misunderstanding and malice, prejudice and persecution,

Ustat.

fierce onslaughts and genocide pogroms, victory and glory, power and prosperity, defeat and subjugation, ridicule and abasement, poverty and deprivation, and yet throughout these vicissitudes, neither friend nor foe, neither neighbour nor stranger, through ill-will or ignorance has ever dared or cared to belittle or denigrate the great Sikh Prophets, the Gurus, in respect of their thoughts, words or deeds, universally holding them in highest estimation, as men, leaders of men and religious prophets. Malcolm, MacGregor, Cunningham, Dorothy Field, Toynbee, Suan Raj, Khushwaqt Raj, Dault Ram, Mohammad Latif display unanimity here though much multinimity elsewhere, while writing on Sikhs and Sikhism. But, for the first time when the Sikhs missed the bus in 1947 and became what they now have become, and even when they succeeded, in the changed circumstances, in establishing a University of Sikh Culture called the Punjabi University at Patiala, and a University of Sikh Religion called, the Guru Nanak Dev University, at Amritsar. "Sikh" professors in these Universities boldly surfaced to proclaim and argue that Guru Tegh Bahadur was robber-chief, in the habit of providing succour and incitement to like-minded lawless elements, which misdeeds of his brought upon him the nemesis of the Mughal law leading to his public decapitation as a criminal at Delhi, of which just punishment, the Great Mughal, Aurangzeb, was altogether innocent and ignorant, that the main and original grievance of Guru Gobind Singh against the good Mughal Government was that land revenue and State taxes were demanded of him, according to law which he was reluctant to pay, and that he met defeat after defeat in his conflicts with the State forces owing to his poor knowledge of field-strategy. Has the current political status of the Sikh people nothing to do with this disgusting phenomenon? Delhi-based pseudo-Nirankaris are not being discussed here for obvious reasons.

22. These are only few instances of the operative and decisive role which political power and prestige play in

relation to acceptability and prevalence of a religion and this law of History, the basic pattern of human behaviour and tendency of human nature is more pertinent in the case of Sikhs and Sikhism, for, Sikhism, unlike most other world-religions, is not merely a Church of worship but is simultaneously, a Church of social policy also, and as soon as the Sikh people are separated from and deprived, of political sovereignty and power, Sikhism becomes eviscerated of its elan and true ethos. It is for this reason that the ambition, the claim, and the destiny adumbrated and proclaimed in the litany: *Raj karega khalsa* is basic to Sikh religion and the assignees of its social commitments, the Sikh people, and the second hemistich of this litany: *aaki rahe na koe* is merely complementary to the first, both being obverse and reverse sides of the same medal.

23. The *shantimayi*, *satyagraha*, *ahimsa* of the twenties and thirties of this century in India were merely subtle shibboleths and Hindus' political gadgets to vex and exasperate the Oxbridge ruling Englishman, and Lord Wavell, the Viceroy of India, has rightly recorded (*The Viceroy's Journal*, London, 1973, p. 238) that "He (Gandhi) is a very tough politician and not a saint", and in this subtle political game the simplistic Sikhs became its first and most willing sacrificial victims, by voluntarily twisting the very fundamentals of their own religion by declaring that Guru Arjan and Guru Tegh Bahadur were embodiments, "*avtars*", of *shantimayi* and *ahimsa*. Not long ago, in a faked, All World Sikh Conference at Amritsar, during the hegemony of the two late lamented saints in Sikh politics, the main 'resolution' adopted specifically named these two Gurus as the Sikhs' only models and guides, thus, repudiating, what they heretically believed to be, 'the other and different' eight Gurus, a doctrine destructive of the very roots of Sikhism. Has not Guru Gobind Singh unambiguously declared that he who deems and understands one Sikh Guru as different from the others, is no Sikh? "The essence of Sikhism is to know and believe all the Ten Gurus as one continuous, unbroken Spirit,

and a failure to understand and accept this is a failure to adopt true Sikhism — "jini jaanaa tin hi sidhi paaee. binu samjhe sidhi hathu na ai." (ਜਿਨੀ ਜਾਨਾ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਸਿਧਿ ਪਾਈ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਸਮਝੇ ਸਿਧਿ ਹਾਥੁ ਨਾ ਆਈ ॥) We must ever remember that the general disapproval of conquest, U.N.O. hotchpotch, "territorial integrity," "non-interference in internal affairs", non-alignment, the Panchshil etc. etc. is a temporary phenomenon.

24. Let us hearken to one who, by the test laid down by Guru Gobind Singh, is "verily a true man" for, he says what he has in mind and there is no disparity between his intentions and his spoken word":

ਗੁਰੂ ਮਰਦ ਬਾਯਦ ਸ਼ਵਦ ਸੁਖਨਵਰ ॥
ਨ ਸ਼ਿਕਮੇ ਦਿਗਰ ਦਰ ਦਹਾਨਿ ਦਿਗਰ ॥੫੫॥

(ਜ਼ਫਰਨਾਮਾ)

He is, by no means, an insignificant person in the contemporary world. Mao Tse Tung says:

"Wherever the army of Chinese Communist Party goes, it creates Marxism-Leninism, it creates a Communist Party and a Communist Government. Only guns and canons create a Party a culture, even a world."

(Problems of the Chinese Revolution, Yen-an, December, 1938)

"Whoever has an army has power, for, war settles everything."

(Problems of War and Strategy; November 6, 1936)

"Everything grows out of the barrel of a gun"

(Selected Works, Vol. II. New York, International Publishers, 1954. p. 272)

25. There is no doubt whatsoever that, throughout History, military conquest and balance-of-terror Principle have been the principal means by which the torch of leadership has been passed on. The conquest of Alexander, the Great, spread Greek thought over Middle East. The military empire of Rome gave civilisation to innumerable backward areas and races. When Rome collapsed Arabs were just in time to snatch the fallen torch. The immediate result of Arab

ascendancy was to plunge the West once more into barbarism by isolating it from Asia, but before the Arabs fell, or as the famous Ibni-Khaldun (1332-1406) puts it, in his, *Muqaddameh* the Arabs lost their *a'sbiyyeh*, basic elan, they handed back the trust to Europe with interest.

26. Secondly, the mantle of leadership frequently falls on the shoulders of a colony of its predecessor. The Arabs derived much of their knowledge from Syria, Egypt and North Africa hitherto colonies of Rome. Spain conquered by the Arabs was to succeed them as a great empire and the USA began as a British colony.

27. It, therefore, follows that the Sikh claim and doctrine (i) that religious worship and social commitment are inter-related, (ii) that political participation and power are complementary to Sikh religious activity, and (iii) that the aspiration to political power to be employed as a fulcrum for social change and upliftment are legitimate Sikh activities, are neither (a) ungrounded in the firm patterns of History, (b) contrary to the tenets of Sikhism, or (c) otherwise impracticable or fantastic merely because of the current depressed, degraded condition and colonial subsidiary status of the Sikhs.

28. When the Sikhs say that politics and religion must not be separated, that is not to claim that the Sikhs have a direct hotline to the deity. It merely means that a man's public, private and spiritual life are inseparable and that the most fruitful and secure is the synergical culture wherein the religion, and the social order facilitate the individual, by the same act and at the same time, to serve his own advantage and that of the group.

29. Sardar Bahadur, Bhai Jodh Singh's gratuitous exhortation to the Sikhs at Patiala is a clear negation of the Sikh doctrine, the lessons of Sikh history and the unambiguous and uncompromisingly clear teachings of the Sikh Gurus.

30. We must now consider whether the discoveries of Modern Science and the insights they provide and the guidance they suggest for understanding human nature and

planning of human society, also called, 'Social Engineering' by those who must put old wine in new bottles before tasting it, agree with or militate against the basic Sikh doctrine enshrined in the litany: *Raj Karega Khalsa*.

31. The latest scientific discipline is Ethology, founded by three winners of the 1973 award of Nobel Prize for Physiology of Medicine, which has gone to Karl von Frisch, Nikolas Tinbergen and Konrad Lorenz. The last-named of them wrote his prize-winning dissertation as early as 1966, *On Aggression*, in which book he has advanced and established the thesis that the man is not only an innately aggressive animal and a hostile one at that, but that the principle of aggressiveness in his instinctual structure, demonstrates and establishes the inevitability of war. He further demonstrates the utility and necessity of aggressiveness for human life and he concludes that aggression is a vital dimension of human nature. For these fundamental discoveries in the Science of Physiology he has been awarded the Nobel Prize, with two others, as co-laureates, seven years ago.

32. In 1974, Desmond Morris, an erstwhile pupil of our Nobel Prize laureate, Nikolas Tinbergen, at Oxford, supported Lorenz's theory as one of the naked truths of his book: *Naked Ape* in which, in prosaic scientific terminology, he has paraphrased, so to speak, the prophetic wisdom of Guru Gobind Singh : "Aggression and Destruction is primary and Genesis is secondary",

ਖੰਡਾ ਪ੍ਰਿਥਮੈ ਸਾਜਿਕੈ ਜਿਨ ਸਭ ਸੈਸਾਰੁ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥ (ਵਾਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਗੋਤੀ ਜੀ ਕੀ)

33. In the sphere of literary fiction, William Golding, in his novel, *Lord of the Flies*, has demonstrated existence of the aggressive instinct, in his powerful literary style. He portrays in his book, the story of young children, stranded on an island, who revert to savagery, once all restraints of civilisation are removed and withdrawn.

34. Robert Andrey, a prestigious dramatist turned anthropologist, in three successive successful best-sellers,

African Genesis, The Territorial Imperative, and The Social Contract has accumulated, classified and interpreted adequate material to explode, once for all finally, the thesis and fallacy that man is a pacific being, that *ahimsa* is his core-essence or that non-violent *satyagraha* is a basic technique of human existence, survival and progress.

35. All these influential theorists have come to their opinions via Ethology, the study of behaviour from the zoological view-point. Ethology involves systematic study of the evolution of human traits through observation of non-human behaviour.

36. Karl von Frisch, our Nobel Prize laureate of 1973 spent his time with birds, fish and bees; Lorenz with grey geese, rats and fighting fish; Tinbergen with birds, and Morris with apes in the London Zoo.

37. Lorenz sees "aggression, far from being a destructive principle as one of the life-preserving functions of the basic instincts". He considers the pertinent question: Will not in group aggression extinguish the group and ultimately the species? His reply is in the negative, for, the strong, he says, learn not to destroy the weak. The Evolution Process is responsible not only for aggression, but also for the phenomenon of inherited patterns of restraint that control and regulate aggression.

38. These patterns display in the submission of the weaker to the stronger through gestures of appeasement to the stronger. The defeated one or the subordinated ally is never killed and destroyed. This is the true exegesis of the Sikh litany : *bache saran jo hoe* Thus the instinct to dominate and destroy *Raj karega Khalsa aaki rahe na koe*, can be and is modified if and when the inferior and the weaker can learn abasement, submission and the survival-value of alliance-*khwar hoe sabh milenge*. In his analogy between man and bird, Lorenz sees the basic secret of survival and evolution embedded in *Nature-qudret of Sikh* philosophical concepts—that if the powerful will learn to subdue and not to kill and destroy, and the weak will learn not

to resist but to submit, all strife, wars and revolutions will come to an end and man will no longer live to concern himself with problems of survival. It is full awareness of this secret of Nature which is evidenced in the Sikh War Ethics and practices testified to by the enemy-chronicler, Qazi Nur Muhammed, in his, *Jangnameh*(1765) that the Sikhs "never kill in battle those who lay down arms or otherwise refuse to resist and fight," *kāh nakushand namard ra hic-gah-fararendeh ra ham na girand rah*.

39. The disturbing truth is there that the man shares this gruesome propensity with the dove, including Picasso's dove adopted by Russians as the emblem of their variety of "Peace." In his well-known book, *King Solomon's Ring*, Lorenz, in the Chapter entitled, "Morals and Weapons" shares with us one of his most disquieting discoveries by telling the reader, how the dove, while by reputation one of the most peaceful birds, is, in reality, one of the cruelest, and it will mutilate and destroy members of its own species without a qualm. On the other hand, contrary to the popular belief and notion, the wolf will not finally kill another wolf in battle if the loser asks for clemency by baring its neck. Here is material of thought for him who deludes himself with the escapist hope that there is greater safety with the *ahimsa-peddler* than with the other who declares, "get converted or be killed" a stupid notion that bedeviled the Sikh leadership in 1947, and rendered them incapable of comprehending the true significance and implications of the British withdrawal from India and the consequences thereof for the Sikhs.

40. The patterns of behaviour in the present still have roots in those of the past and thus to understand man one must understand his past, that is, an analysis of animals and men, particularly those who deem themselves as so clever as competent to find their way about in life without taking refuge in the revealed guidance, that is the Guru : "ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੂ ਨ ਚੇਤਨੀ ਮਨਿ ਆਪਣੈ ਸੁਚੇਤ" as the Sikh scripture puts it.

41. *Raj karega Khalsa aaki rahe na koe. khwar hoe sabh milenge bache saran jo hoe*, is not only a divinely revealed truth but a well-established scientific fact. Lorenz, Andry and Morris have not picked up their theories from the air. They belong to an insistent, prestigious tradition of western speculation and Scientific inquiries that stretches back to Sigmund Freud, through Spangler to Thomas Hobbs. Spangler in his, *Magnum Opus: Decline of the West*, has been virulent about his claims about aggressiveness. "The beast of prey", he says, "is the highest form of active life. The human race ranks highly because it belongs to the class of beasts of prey. Man lives engaged in aggression,³ killing, annihilating. Man is a beast of prey. I shall say it again and again. The traders in virtue, the champions of social ethics are but beasts of prey with their teeth broken. Spangler's contribution to Nazi ideology was not insignificant.

42. Freud's firm conviction about the aggressive instinct in man is patent in his: *Civilisation and its Discontents*. In it he says: "The truth is that men are not friendly, gentle creatures wishing for love, who simply defend themselves if they are attacked, but that a powerful measure for aggression has to be reckoned with as a part of their instinctual endowment."

43. For Freud, man is not a rational animal but a repressed animal "Civilisation, suppression and neurosis are inevitably associated in such a way that the more civilisation, the more neurosis, the less suppression, the less neurosis and the less civilisation." Thus, it is not in our power "to dislodge the greatest of our obstacle to civilisation which is the constitutional tendency in man to aggression."

44. He was obviously unaware of the divine guidance that the teachings of the Guru, that shows mankind the way out of this patent predicament—the practice of *Nam-yoga*;

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹੁ ਤਤੁ ਬੀਚਾਰਾ ॥ ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਭਜਨ ਨਾਹੀ ਛੁਟਕਾਰਾ ॥

(ਗਉੜੀ ਮਹਲਾ ੫, ਪੰਨਾ 188)

That human nature can be totally transmuted is a proposition not easily acceptable to Western mind.

45. It is the hatred we suppress and repress with difficulty that remains the main spring of our social life. Man, the aggressive beast of prey, is the core-essence of a social *homo sapiens*, and not the lachrymose love-sentiment and gushing pity of the Christian good, and the mercy, *daya* of the Hindu *Parameshwar*. Nietzsche was making out a point when he said in his, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*: "God is dead, God is dead. He died of pity." It is a basic misconception of human nature to accord primacy to non-violence, *ahimsa* and to uphold socially uncommitted religion and secular politics, separated from religion. The Sikh idiom of thought made prevalent by Guru Gobind Singh himself to designate the elite man, as the ferocious lion *Singh*; the king crocodile, *Nihang*; the spread-hooded cobra, *Bhujangi*; the angry snake in the attack-posture, *pacidehmar*,⁴ enshrines the ultimate scientific truth about human nature and destiny and to confuse and mislead the Sikhs on this point as the Patiala performance of Bhai Jodh Singh seeks to do, is infamous and indefensible altogether.

46. Freud's theories and the scientific insights now provided by Ethology are generally accepted as supporting the scientific view that war, the highest political activity, is inevitable and necessary and desirable for human weal, Bertrand Russell gave him support by arguing that it was "only the external enemy which supplied the cohesive force of Society, so that a World-state, if it were firmly established, would have no enemies to fear and would, therefore, be in danger of breaking down through lack of cohesive force."

47. Did not Confucius declare two thousand years ago that, "a country that has no external enemies is doomed?"

48. Aggressiveness, war, then is natural quality of human

4. ਚਿਹਾ ਸੁਦ ਕਿ ਦੂ ਬੱਚਗਾਂ ਕੁਸਤਰ ਚਾਰ। ਕਿ ਬਾਕੀ ਬਮਾਂਦਸਤ ਪੇਚੀਦਾ ਮਾਰ। 78। (ਜਫਰਨਾਮਾ)

psyche and the Sikh doctrine of *Raj karega khalsa* is a sane, scientific doctrine and legitimate religious aspiration and to attempt to wean the Sikhs away from it is a crime against sanity and Science, Religion and God. To exhort Sikhs to insulate religion from politics and to fall into the fatal error of believing in possibility of a full and genuine religious life without a base of political autonomy and a fulcrum of political power is an utterly mean, unforgivable thing to do.

49. The Sikh doctrine of '*Raj karega Khalsa*' is useful socially and necessary if society is to hold together. Since today war has become so dangerous to indulge in on massive scale, Lorenz speaks of how we suffer "an insufficient discharge of the aggressive drive." Desmond Morris is hopelessly pessimistic in relation to any optimism expressed as to our ability to remould our way of life:

"Control our aggressive and territorial feelings and dominate all our basic urges, I submit, that, this is rubbish. Our raw animal nature will never permit this."

"Permanent peace", "Progressive prosperity", "Classless society", "Secular Politics", "a private personal Religion", "Insulation of religion from politics" are just poppycock or psychodelic, utopian dreams. Only rarely are three periods of World-peace with minor skirmishes, as during the Pax Romana (27 B.C.-A.D. 180) and the hundred years of Pax Britannica (1814-1914).

50. There is no higher truth and more reliable guidance available to mankind than the principles embedded in and implicated by the words, spoken by the 'blessed mouth' of Guru Gobind Singh :

*Raj karega Khalsa aaki rahe na koe,
khwar hoe sabh milenge bache saran jo hoe.*

ਰਾਜ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਆਕੀ ਰਹੇ ਨਾ ਕੋਇ ॥

ਖਵਾਰ ਹੋਇ ਸਭ ਮਿਲੇਂਗੇ ਬਚੇ ਸਰਨ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ ॥

AWAKE ! YOUNG KHALSA*

Mr. President, the Young Khalsa, Throughout the ages, it has been conceded that the future belongs to the young, but never, so far, that the present belongs to the young.

It is a new phenomenon in the history of civilisation that the young have forcibly and vehemently staked the claim that they are the masters of the present and that they are justified in repudiating the leadership and claim to infallibility of the old men of the present and the authority of the past generations of old men from which the old men of the present generation derive their claim to guide the young.

The young men everywhere, in Europe, in Asia, in Africa and in the Americas, are dissatisfied with the ways of the old men. They are openly skeptical about the wisdom of the old men and are impatient with all forms of authority that demands unquestioning obedience. They are angry young men.

BEATLES AND HIPPIES

What do they want? They do not seem to know exactly. But they are very angry.

Their anger has led them into strange bye-paths. There are these "beatles", their creed is revolt, disorder, chaos, especially activity that has no meaning. This they think, is the road to freedom, a breakaway from the values and institutions of the past-the "ratrace", as they call it-and they think that out

* Speech delivered at Gandhi Bhavan, P.U. Chandigarh on 23rd August, 1968.

of repudiation and negation, a new world will be born in which there is neither discord nor tension, neither hypocrisy nor falsehood. Then there are these "hippies", a special sect of the "beatles" who believe that the road to a new garden, where there is eternal sunshine and ever-blooming flower-season, is blocked by the limitations of the normal mind. To break through and transcend these limitations they take to, what are called, mind-expanding drugs, *marijuana*, *L.S.D.*, *hashish*, alcohol and *bhang*. None has, so far returned from these foot-paths to report the discovery of a new garden of Eden, though many have perished in body and before our very eyes.

STUDENTS UNREST

Recently, the entire student community of the ancient University of Sorbonne in France, suddenly staged an unprecedented revolt that threw the whole country and its Government into a turmoil. It all began, in the month of last May, with the students' strike and their protest demonstrations. The students were dissatisfied with their courses of studies with the methods of teaching and with the administration of educational facilities in the University. They not only refused to attend classes, but they turned out teachers and, other functionaries, and occupied lecture rooms, laboratories, libraries and other buildings. They began to march up and down the boulevards of Paris which brought them in conflict with the police. The police, as they often do, used excessive force in breaking up students' meetings and demonstrations, that led to pitched battles between the students and the police. Barricades were put up by the students in the streets, more particularly in the Latin Quarter. The protest soon turned into revolt in which the whole nation seemed to join. The students issued a call to industrial workers to join in their attempt to overthrow the established order. Within a couple of days, there was a general strike bringing all production and services

to a dead stop. Nearly a crore of workers joined this revolt of the students and the strikers in many place took possession of their places of work, According to the famous views and news weekly, *Time*, "General De Gaulle saw his government crumbling beneath him, Paris hostile and ready to explode and opposition politicians closing ranks to cut him down."

It is not my purpose, here, to analyse the causes of this phenomenon in France or to trace its history. I have merely outlined its extent and magnitude to indicate the temper and stirrings of the modern young students elsewhere.

What was the nature of these stirrings? The Paris correspondent of the *Weekend Review*, has stated that according to the students, "the University is no more than a tool to mould new managers in which capitalism requires to continue the oppression of the working classes."

What they wanted was, stated the correspondent :

"a permanent confrontation, albeit intellectual, between existing institutions and successive younger generations. They purposely refrain from stating their demands in concrete forms, in the belief that what is needed is not the replacement of old institutions and principles by new ones, but a permanent awareness of the futility of dogmatism."

This Students' strike did not last long. Along with the strike of workers, the students' revolt also subsided after four or five weeks' duration, after leaving for their contemporaries and the posterity a saga of noble impulses and heroic deeds.

ANALYTIC STUDY OF UNREST

I have narrated this story before you, the Sikh Students, with a purpose. It has implications, such as might provide guidelines for the All India Sikh Students' Association. Firstly, in common with the youth movements, throughout the world, in the last three decades or so, this students' revolt has underlined the basic dissatisfaction of the young with the

ways of the older generations. Secondly, it has asserted the fundamental right of the young to participate, through revolutionary activity, to demolish and replace institutions and ideas. Lastly, it represents a yearning demand by the young for their right to be equipped for the modern life.

GUIDELINES FOR SIKH YOUTH

Did Guru Gobind Singh foresee these world-wide developments when he said that, "After the Britishers quit India, the young Khalsa shall arise to keen its tryst with Destiny."¹

Here are then the guidelines for you, the All India Sikh Students Association, and the young Khalsa, provided by the prophecy of the Guru and the mysterious and powerful stirrings that are moving the generation of the young, today, and these guidelines indicate that the young Sikh students, men and women, must join together, without fear and for freeing themselves from all duress, to transform themselves into, what the Rider of the Blue Horse intended them to be :

"The sword in the Hand of God, and a fit instrument of the Divine Will"

*Khalsa Akal purkh ki fauj,
pargatio Khalsa Parmatam ki mauj.*

ਖਾਲਸਾ ਅਕਾਲ ਪੁਰਖ ਕੀ ਫੌਜ।
ਪ੍ਰਗਟਿਓ ਖਾਲਸਾ ਪ੍ਰਮਾਤਮ ਕੀ ਮੌਜ।

(ਸਰਬਲੋਚ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ)

Secondly, these guidelines indicate that the Young Khalsa now must actively undertake to deliver the Sikh masses from the slavery of spiritual charlatans, called the *sants* and the Sikh Panth from the ruinous leadership of incompetent *thugs* and uneducated hooligans, called, the *satbedars*.

Thirdly and lastly, they must come forward to take up and hold aloft the abandoned flag of Guru Gobind Singh under which the Khalsa must secure for itself a just and

1. Des chhad jab jahein farangi. Tab gajjange more bhujangi.

ਦੇਸ ਛਡ ਜਬ ਜਾਹੈ ਫਰਾਂਗੀ। ਤਬ ਗੱਜਣਗੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਭੁਜੰਗੀ।

rightful place within a united India and an integrated Indian nation, for the Sikh people in the form of a constitutionally recognised Sikh Homeland wherein the Sikhs can encourage and preserve the Sikh way of life through the social pattern of a political community and the ideology of a State. In such a State we shall be able to ban public smoking in the interests of national health, and penalise apostasy, back-sliding and other forms of decay in human character, through legislative measures, particularly in so far as it affects public civil service and military personnel, in the interest of national character.

In such a State alone can we mould and regulate the educational processes and institutions to foster and strengthen the life-giving impulses of Sikhism in the interest of a regenerated India as a world-power.

Such a State alone can halt process of disintegration of the collective Soul of the Khalsa, set into motion by the Constitution Act of 1950, with its overtones of secularism.

Such a State is necessary for actively containing and halting the corroding influences of ideologies that stalk this sacred land of India in the guise of Socialism and Communism, about which the most penetrating minds of the first half of the 20th century, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, have declared that they are a deadly prelude to atheism and materialism, that cannot but degrade the human character and debase the human soul, in the end.

SIKH HOMELAND IN INTEREST OF INDIA

The immediate establishment of such a State, the Sikh Homeland is in the best interests of India and is the need of the hour. To strive for its achievement is the prerogative and duty of the Young Khalsa, including the All India Sikh Students' Association. It is not only to the loyalty and duty of the Young Khalsa that I appeal to in this behalf, it is also, it is first and it is above all, in the national interest of a united Indian nation and an integrated country that I have in view in making this appeal.

DANGERS TO COMMUNITY AND THE COUNTRY

Then there is another aspect of the matter that I have in view in making this appeal. Deliberate and persistent efforts are being made to disintegrate and dissolve the Khalsa ever since the country has gained independence. Under the disguise of democracy, secularism and theory of one nation, subtle schemes and policies are being adopted with the aim of first disintegrating the Khalsa into individual Sikhs and then debasing the individual Sikhs into secular citizens so that they make good cannon fodder, good *chowkidars* of banks and business establishments owned by others and good chauffeurs for expensive limousines of industrial magnates of a united Indian nation, and thus they are deprived of their history-making potency and dynamism. To reduce the Royal Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh into the secular proletariat of hewers of wood and drawers of water for the traditional higher classes of Hindus and the new privileged class of a free India, is the greatest betrayal of trust created by the sacrifices of those who have, throughout the ages, toiled and suffered and sacrificed for freedom of *Dharma*, that is India, that is, Bharat. This evil design must be frustrated by the Young Khalsa.

In educational texts and policies, they are injecting anti-Sikh virus. In the public services they are creating an atmosphere hostile to the self-respect, integrity and cohesiveness of the Khalsa.

In the fighting forces of the country they are reducing the Singhs, the lions of Guru Gobind Singh, into shaven and shorn slaves of a godless centre of power and command and everywhere and in every way it is sought to devalue the Sikhs and its visible apotheosis and ideal, the Khalsa.

Those now in power, do not seem to realise that thus they are reducing the Sikh people to a condition of rootlessness and individual irresponsibility such as can only add to the gangs of smugglers, communists and antisocial forces. Unless they are extricated from this morass through establishment of the

Sikh Homeland or Sikhistan where they are enabled to salvage their identity. The Sikhs are bound to become a danger to others in their desperate efforts to find meaning and purpose through whatever comes to hand, communism—nihilism, bizarre religions, or far-out protest movements. They will become a hazard to everyone, more so to those who now assiduously plan to disintegrate and dissolve them back of the Sikh Society, behind their energy and productive capacity, at the root of their deathless courage and undying loyalty to high causes, there is something as powerful as it is intangible. This power is a set of ideas and attitudes and convictions and the confidence that these ideas and attitudes and convictions are viable. If they are forced to the belief that it is not so they will erupt, before they shed off their panoply of history-making power and darkness is made to gather around the Khalsa. They will not be transformed into pliant tools of the Hindu privilegentia, as is hoped.

The cohesiveness of the Sikh Society, the commitment of a large number of Sikhs to the ideals of the Khalsa to live together, to work together and to aspire together is a fairly mysterious thing and the modern Hindu and the present rulers of India do not know what makes it happen. Once the Khalsa is made to pull apart, no one will ever know how to go about repairing it.

Guru Gobind Singhs are not born every day and the consequences to India, to Hinduism and to Hindu society, and to the world indirectly, will be terrible and grievous. For this reason, the Sikh Homeland demand, made recently by the Shiromani Akali Dal, must be immediately conceded.

GURDWARAS IN SIKH HOMELAND

Look at the Sikh gurdwaras and their statutory management through the popularly elected Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. The historical Sikh gurdwaras are essentially monuments of national importance

in so far as they memorialise incidents and sacrifices made to re-establish dharma in the North Western Indian from where it had all but vanished for nearly a millennium. In a truly nationalist State, maintenance, upkeep and financing their proper functions should be a charge on the public exchequer in the interests of public policy. The non-historical Sikh gurdwaras must be so managed through State statutes as to make them true community-centres of higher culture. But what is the position today ? They are in the hands of persons who know little of Sikhism and have corrupted the sacred places into dens of vice and foci of corruption and who have made them strongholds of a godless politics and materialism outlook on life. They are now virtually a cancerous growth in Sikhism and sources of poisonous infection to the health of society. This grave malady could be cured only if the Sikh Homeland or Sikhistan is conceded and established. And unless this malady is cured, it continues as a grave danger to the nation and the country.

Such is the forbidding task that beckons Young Sikh men and women to an activity inspired by pure altruism and high idealism. Such a task cannot be accomplished by ill-informed and timid minds nor through factionalism or narrow-mindedness. Through high resolve, deep dedication and undying sense of unity of purpose alone can such great task be tackled.

Men and women of the All India Sikh Students Association, combat be ready and be on constant alert, *tiar-bartar*, and march forward with unity in steps and hearts, holding aloft sky high the golden banner of the Lord of the White Hawk, so that the Khalsa may regain its rightful position in a strong united and resurgent India as a world power, which is its and her true destiny.

Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Waheguru ji ki Fateh.

THE FIRST MARTYR OF SIKH HOMELAND*

Mr. President, Sir, in the Motion before the House, it is stated that S. Darshan Singh Pheruman courted martyrdom, "for the inclusion of Chandigarh etc. in the state of Punjab."

Sir, this is somewhat misleading. Guru Nanak had said that a man must say and do only that which can be tested by and can be measured upto truth, *man sach kasvatti laaee-ai tulae-ai poorai tol*. "ਮਨੁ ਸਚ ਕਸਵਟੀ ਲਾਈਐ ਤੁਲੀਐ ਪੂਰੈ ਤੋਲਿ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 22). To say what is misleading, in relation to great martyrdom like that of Pheruman is improper.

The last Will and Testament of S. Darshan Singh Pheruman has now been made public and the press has extensively reproduced it. This Will and Testament was written in my presence on the 1st of August 1969 and it is attested by two reliable witnesses, as the law requires. As a measure of abundant caution, S. Darshan Singh Pheruman desired that his Will and Testament may be tape-recorded in his own voice, which has also been done and it is preserved.

Mr. President, there can be no more reliable evidence with regard to the intentions of S. Darshan Singh Pheruman than his own duly recorded Will and Testament.

In this Testament, inter alia, S. Darshan Singh Pheruman has said as follows:

"For the last half a century, I have worked through sufferings and tribulations for the freedom of my country and

* A Speech in Punjab Assembly on 30th Oct., 1969.

for ensuring ever increasing ascendancy and expansion of the Panth. This episode of my life is an open book before the public.'

"The country is now free but the Panth is still in bondage. In the country, corruption and moral degradation has vastly increased. The management of the Sikh Gurdwaras and the conduct of Sikh politics has fallen into the hands of hypocrites, styling themselves pious men and saints and those, who do not wish the Panth well. The doctrines of the Sikh religion, the traditions of the Khalsa, the historical splendour of the Sikh Nation has been, thus, trampled under the feet of these undesirable persons.

"Those who had played up the drama of undertaking solemn vows before the holy Akal Takht to immolate themselves, have by taking recourse to lies and cowardice, captured the decision-making centres of power, of institutions of Sikh religion and affairs of the Sikhs and they have also now succeeded in their conspiracy to capture the government of the State of Punjab.

To establish before the world and history that cheating, hypocrisy, cowardice and double dealing, is the real essence of Sikhism and the Sikh way of life, they have constructed ugly memorials to the glorification of Sant Fateh Singh and his associates, which memorials claim to be the rivals of the Throne of the Immortal God, the Akal Takht. These blasphemous memorials are being kept in existence, in the face of resentment of the entire Sikh people, through the police power of Punjab Government.

The insults and infamy that is being heaped on the Sikh people today is unparalleled in Sikh history.

The way the religion is being degraded today has never been so done in the past.

The traitors of the Panth and the pious frauds, called saints, have successfully hatched an ugly conspiracy to eliminate every vestige of the wholesome influence of Sikh

region from Sikh politics with the purpose of making Sikh People the camp followers and slaves of others.

This pitch dark night of falsehood and these treacherous tools of hypocrisy cannot now be overcome except through martyrdom.

The grave sin that now beclouds the destiny of the Panth on account of solemn vows taken before the Akal Takht having been disregarded, is the greatest obstacle against the renaissance and resurgence of the Panth.

This grave sin can be washed away only through a genuine and pure martyrdom.

The ugly and audacious memorials which Sant Fateh Singh has got constructed, as rivals of the holy Akal Takht, are calling loudly for genuine sacrifices from the Singhs.

The Panth cannot exist meaningfully by turning its back on Guru Akal Purkh.

Now, therefore, it has become imperative that some Singhs of the Guru should offer his head as an expiation, to wash away the sins committed by the nominal Sikh leaders and Sikh traitors so that the Panth may attain its true status of *sui generis* sovereignty within the constitutional framework of a free and sovereign India and so that next step may become possible for establishment of the Sikh Homeland within the Union of India.

To achieve this end, I am going to lay down my life.

From these citations, Mr. President, it is clear that S. Darshan Singh Pheruman courted a deliberate and unique martyrdom in the interests of a good and holy cause.

These are the objectives for which S. Darshan Singh Pheruman courted martyrdom:

1. He courted martyrdom so that the black spots of shame and infame made by those Sikh leaders who disengaged and lied from the solemn vows of self-immolation that they had taken before the holy Akal Takht, and thus acted in utter cowardice, by taking recourse to lies and hypocrisy, are removed.

2. S. Darshan Singh Pheruman laid down his life to uphold the solemn promises which some false Sikh leaders had publicly made to secure Chandigarh, Bhakra Complex and other left-out Punjabi areas for the Punjab state.

3. S. Darshan Singh Pheruman laid down his life to repair and revive the spiritual link between the Collectivity of the Sikhs and the unseen Powers, which link had been gravely damaged by the misdeeds of those who have erected 'Havan Kunds' on the Akal Takht, but who like cowards have fled away from their pledged words, on seeing the face of angel of Death. (Interruptions).

4. He courted martyrdom for establishment of the Sikh Homeland within the constitutional framework and the Union of India.

I salute this iron man, this self-respecting Sikh, this brave Punjabi, this great patriot and the first martyr in the cause of the Sikh Homeland.

Sir, in the month of July 1969, S. Darshan Singh Pheruman had made it publicly clear his firm intention to lay down his life in the cause of religion. He wrote two personnel letters to Sri Fateh Singh, called the Sant, and also an open letter to him requesting him to demolish 'Agni Kunds', which S. Darshan Singh described as the rivals of the holy Akal Takht and which structures he considered as standing disgrace and provocation to the whole Panth as well as symbols of hypocrisy and fraud. S. Darshan Singh called upon Sri Fateh Singh (Sant) that he should join hands with him in making extreme sacrifice to remove the grave injury done to the fundamental doctrine of Sikhism. But the only reply Sri Fateh Singh gave was by describing S. Darshan Singh Pheruman as a stunt maker, and the shoe lickers of Sri Fateh Singh called this great martyr an agent of the Congress Government of Delhi.

On the 1st of August 1969, a conference was held at Rayya in which S. Darshan Singh made a public declaration that on the 14th of August he will go to pay homage at the Golden Temple and then he will repeat the same *Ardas*, already made

by Sri Fateh Singh and his companions a number of times and then broken as many times. After the *Ardas*, S. Darshan Singh Pheruman declared his intention to go on an indefinite fast till the terms of this *Ardas* are conceded or till death intervenes. I was present at this Conference and within my hearing S. Darshan Singh Pheruman stressed again and again his firm desire that after he enters on his indefinite fast and after his martyrdom nothing should be done to disturb the public peace or to damage public property.

On the 9th August, an unknown person, by the name of Gurdit Singh, appears to have made a report to the Police Station, Beas. It is anybody's guess as to whether this Gurdit Singh made this report of his own accord or under instigation. In this report this Gurdit Singh alleged that S. Darshan Singh Pheruman publicly calls Sri Fateh Singh (Sant) a hypocrite and a pious fraud. Also it was alleged that S. Darshan Singh Pheruman did not consider the present Akali-Jan Sangh Government as a true representative of the Panth or well-wisher of the Panth. It was alleged that S. Darshan Singh Pheruman also talked in terms of clash of swords. A State, the Chief Minister of which is capable of deliberately making utterly false and baseless accusation in the press against an insignificant person like myself, to the effect that on the 28th August at village Pheruman, I made some provocative public speech. In that state, where is the difficulty in finding out some Gurdit Singh or Ganga Ram, who can be persuaded to make false report against any person whatsoever?

On the 10th of August Bhai Chanan Singh, also known as the 'little Sant' and Bhai Fateh Singh, called, the 'elder Sant', told S. Gian Singh Rarewala at Ganga Nagar that they had taken adequate steps to deal with S. Darshan Singh Pheruman.

It is obvious that the reference is to the report which one Gurdit Singh made in the Police Station of Beas against S. Darshan Singh Pheruman on the 9th of August.

This fact has been revealed by S. Gian Singh Rarewala

in an open letter that has appeared in the press, written by him to Sri Fateh Singh (Sant).

On the 12th of August, the Police records show that the police started looking into the matter but, as is the requirement of law, the police did not record any statement whatsoever of Sardar Darshan Singh Pheruman against whom the allegation had been made.

On the night between the 12th and the 13th August, precisely at mid-night, the hordes of Punjab Police entered the residential house of S. Darshan Singh Pheruman, outside the village Pheruman and arrested him under Section 9 of the Punjab Security Act., and lodged him in the jail at Amritsar.

On the 15th August, 1969 at exactly 4 P.M, as was the declared intention of S. Darshan Singh Pheruman, he performed the same *Ardas* which he was to perform at the Akal Takht after paying homage at the Golden Temple, and started his indefinite fast. He drank a glass of tap water before starting his fast unto death.

On the 16th August, 1969 and on the days following, Sri Fateh Singh (Sant) started a regular campaign of vilification against S. Darshan Singh Pheruman complaining that the real objective of S. Darshan Singh Pheruman was to deprive Sri Fateh Singh of his unquestioned and God-given leadership of the Sikh Panth.

In this manner Sri Fateh Singh (Sant) made it abundantly plain that the interpretation which the Jan Sangh-Akali Government of the Punjab should put on Section 9 of the Punjab Security Act is that the "Security of the State" of Punjab, means "protecting and maintaining the overlordship of Sri Fateh Singh over the religious and political affairs of the Punjab".

In the third week of September, S. Darshan Singh Pheruman was told by the Chief Minister of Punjab in jail that in case S. Darshan Singh Pheruman insisted on wishing his dead body to be cremated in "Havan Kunds" constructed by Sri Fateh Singh on the adjoining roof of the Akal Takht, Sri

Fateh Singh and Bhai Chanan Singh, the elder and the little saints respectively, would cause much bloodshed within the premises of the Golden Temple through goondas which both of them had already hired and brought to the Golden Temple for this purpose. In view of this, S. Darshan Singh Pheruman agreed to have his body cremated in his native village so that there may not be caused bloodshed amongst the Sikhs on his account.

At this time, S. Darshan Singh Pheruman was removed to the Government Hospital to Amritsar, but he was kept under strict security conditions and interviews with him were severely regulated by the Police.

In the beginning of October, formal and technical orders of his release were passed by the Punjab Government, but in practice S. Darshan Singh Pheruman remained a prisoner in the Amritsar Hospital.

On 25th October, he became so weak as to pass into frequent comas of unconsciousness and it was at this stage that he instructed his male and female relatives on his bed side to see that whether in life or in death the unclean shadow of Sri Fateh Singh (Sant) does not fall on his body.

This fact has been publicly testified by the relations of S. Darshan Singh Pheruman. On the 27th October, Sri Fateh Singh (Sant) accompanied by his entourage, carrying a basket full of flowers went to the Government Hospital at Amritsar to do a hypocritical homage to the half dead body of the martyr, but as it happened, the moment Sri Fateh Singh put his foot inside the Hospital room the electric lights in whole town of Amritsar suddenly failed and remained so far over 48 hours owing to some major breakdown in the Power House. This is how it was that the last wish of S. Darshan Singh Pheruman was literally fulfilled and the shadow of Sri Fateh Singh (Sant) and his hangers-on did not fall on the body of the martyr. As the poet says, "*God Himself looks after the good name and honour of his devotees*". *Rakh lee mere Khuda ne meri bekasi ki sharam.*

On the 27th October at 3.30 P.M., after fasting for full 74 days, S. Darshan Singh Pheruman breathed his last, steadfast to the last on the *Ardas* that he had performed and he thus attained the status of a great brave soul, a great martyr, and the eternal status reserved for those whose integrity remains unshaken throughout. About such people it is said in the Guru Granth "Love of the devotee of God finally reached its true fulfilment :

ਸੇਵਕ ਕੀ ਓੜਕਿ ਨਿਬਰੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 1000)

The Legislative Assembly was sitting at that time at Chandigarh, but the Chief Minister did not divulge the news of the martyrdom till 4:30 P.M. and not till an honourable member of the Opposition made it known to the House.

At Amritsar, the sacred body of the martyr was forcibly snatched by police authorities from the relatives of S. Darshan Singh Pheruman after using severe violence to silence their protests, and the authorities rushed the body by out of the way routes to the village of Pheruman and there made an unsuccessful attempt to cremate the body the same evening.

Sir, S. Darshan Singh Pheruman is a great Sikh of the 20th century and he is a great martyr, who was made to lay down his life for a great religious principle by the so-called, Akali Government in the state which was wholly concerned with protecting and sustaining the improper hold of Sri Fateh Singh (Sant) on the religious affairs of the Sikhs, on the politics of the Panth and on the Government of the state. This evil Government kept him in captivity with the improper objectives of forcing him to turn his back on the holy *Ardas* he had performed so that there should be none who can cut Sri Fateh Singh (Sant) to his proper size. S. Darshan Singh Pheruman was prevented from paying his last homage of the Golden Temple at Amritsar and nor was he allowed to say his *Ardas* at holy Akal Takht, the fundamental right of a Sikh that has never been denied ever except under the oppressive rule of later Mughals. In the end, the dead body of the martyr was

subjected to shameless indignities by the minions of this Government, and in keeping with their shameful behaviour the Government had the martyr's body cremated at Pheruman on 28th October in a most unceremonial manner under the pretext of according him a State funeral.

This story has now become a part of the history. No duplicity, no cleverness and no amount of fabricated lies or political chicanery can conceal the true character of this grave interference in the Sikh religion, and this grave episode of official oppression. Well does the poet say: "*the day of judgement is nigh and the blood of the innocent shall cry out the truth and nothing shall be able to conceal it*".

*Karib hai yaro roze mehshar chupega kuchton ka khun kionkar,
Jo chup rahega zabani-khanjar lahu pukarega astin ka.*

ਕਰੀਬ ਹੈ ਯਾਰੋ ਰੋਜ਼-ਏ-ਮਹਿਸਰ, ਛੁਪੇਗਾ ਕੁਸ਼ਤੂਨ ਕਾ ਖੂਨ ਕਿਉਂਕਰ,
ਜੋ ਚੁਪ ਰਹੇਗੀ ਜ਼ਬਾਨੇ-ਖੰਜਰ ਲਹੂ ਪੁਕਾਰੇਗਾ ਆਸਤੀਨ ਕਾ।

THESE HAVANKUNDS*

(A New Sikh Tomfoolery)

Within the history rich and numinous precincts of the Golden Temple at Amritsar, a number of brick and cement ugly structures, resembling baking ovens, have been raised for the last many years. On them are inscribed the name and praises of the present leader and controller of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, Fateh Singh, called, the Sant. This inscription is prominently visible to all who enter the holy and hallowed precincts of the Golden Temple, and these anti aesthetic structures have been raised in a manner as to make them vie in status and dignity with the Akal Takht, the Throne of the Immortal God.

2. These structures are loosely called, *havankunds* or *agnikunds*, nobody knowing how to designate them properly in the context of their origin and significance. It is claimed by the creators of these monstrosities and the present controllers of the SGPC that these structures have been set up as a memorial to those who claim to have passed through Valley of death to achieve a unilingual Punjabi State and that for this reason these memorials can justly be erected and maintained within the divine precincts of the Golden Temple and in rude rivalry to the holy Akal Takht. Simultaneously, it is asserted that a unilingual Punjabi State never was a demand of the Sikh Panth, the mystic collectivity of the Sikh people, and that the present Punjabi speaking State has nothing whatever to do with Sikhism or the Sikh people as such, and that it is entirely

* Tract published by S. Avtar Singh Ambalvi (AISSF).

a state carved out on the wholly secular basis of a language meant to satisfy the aspirations of all those Sikhs and non-Sikhs alike, residing in the new Punjab. How can a purely administrative and political and secular demarcation of a state be memorialised in the numinous precincts of the Harimandar and in audacious rivalry to the holy Akal Takht is a matter which does not seem to worry the present controllers of the SGPC, for, logic is not one of their strong points.

3. Sometime ago, when Sikh feelings rose in crescendo against the hypocrisy and shame that these structures perpetuate, the President of the SGPC stage-managed, what he called, a World Sikh Convention. An objective enquiry into the religious and social backgrounds of the "delegates" of this Convention, the countries of their origin and from where they were actually picked up by the President of the SGPC, who has, since, formally claimed for himself the status and prerogatives of a sovereign, infallible Pope, thus rendering any such future World Sikh Convention unnecessary, if not altogether superfluous, will furnish most interesting material to those interested in study of typologies of modern decadent political communities. This Convention passed a unanimous resolution favouring retention and maintenance of these structures in perpetuity while one of the delegates, the current Chief Minister of the Punjab, a retired Judge of a High Court, offered to have these structures encased in marble and covered with gold plates at state expense. This, the present controllers of the Sikh Gurdwaras, say, is their sanction for perpetuating these structures.

4. Two questions arise before inquisitive minds in connection with these structures.

- (1) What are the roots, in the context of Sikh history and doctrine and the Indian cultural traditions, out of which these structures have grown?
- (2) What is the validity of the sanction, being accorded to them through the *tamasha* of a Sikh World Convention?

5. Let us take the second question first. It is certain, that

there is no precedent whatsoever for a World Sikh Convention of this kind in the Sikh historical tradition. There is the doctrine of the *Sarbat Khalsa*, the Collectivity of the Sikh People, and there is the doctrine of the *Gurmata*. The latter of these doctrines, originates from two distinct cultural traditions, the one, Aryan and the other, Semetic. The Aryan doctrine is embodied in the concept of the *Panchas* which goes back to be Veda. On this is based the Aryan concept of Democracy. Its essence is that contingent matters of common interest and secular nature, must be decided by the representative Will of the people. It is to be emphasized that this doctrine of the *panchas*, as adumbrated in the Veda, is operative not in the domain of things spiritual nor of postulates and principles of things secular, but applies only to matters" of day to day implementation of these principles. The point is that no *panchayat* can pronounce on matters of religious doctrine or postulates of politics or social organization, that it may only apply the accepted practices and postulates to a given situation. Then there is the Islamic doctrine of *ijma* i.e. universal consensus. This *ijma* is a source of Muslim jurisprudence alongwith certain other sources. The principle of *ijma* is, that in matters not covered by the other sources of Muslim jurisprudence, such as *karan* or *hadith*, *ulema*, the pious intellectuals of the community, who are competent to judge the matter in a given age, may pronounce upon them through consensus. It is the essence of *ijma* that only those acknowledged as competent to judge in these matters are to make the pronouncement and it is also the essence of *ijma* that such a pronouncement cannot be made in an ad-hoc assembly, and certainly not by demegogy followed by votes; it must be made naturally, freely and in response to an urge of the Muslim people and not as a result of a formally convened process. The Sikh *gurmata* is an amalgam of these two traditions and doctrines, that of *panchas* and that of *ijma* : A Sikh *gurumata* cannot pronounce on matters of fundamentals, or on doctrines or on postulates. It is to operate as a representative of the

entire Sikh People and not to function as an ad-hoc hand-picked assembly of special invitees convened by a party or faction or a self-styled Pope. Its decisions are not to be made by counting of votes and they must represent the general consensus of those intellectual and pious Sikhs who are competent to judge the matters under reference. This is the true nature of a *gurmata* of which a farcical and crude display was made by the magnates of the SGPC, recently, in the form of a Sikh World Convention to pronounce upon the validity of erection and maintenance of these structures within the precincts of the Heart of Sikhdom, the Golden Temple.

6. Fortunately and unfortunately, both, the proceedings of this World Sikh Convention have been preserved in the official publications of the SGPC. Any person who has some respect for logical reasoning and who has some acquaintance with the Sikh doctrines and traditions can see for himself how trivial and cussed have been the reasons advanced in favour of the erection and maintenance of this insult to Sikh dignity, called, the *havankunds*. Unfortunately, the posterity will have authentic material to feel ashamed at the low level of intelligence and the low moral sensitivity to which many Sikhs have sunk during the second half of the twentieth century. There is not a single serious or plausible argument advanced on the subject matter before this, so called, World Gathering of representative Sikhs, and the entire proceedings consist of pervert demagoguery and foolish irrelevancies.

7. So much for this All World Sikh Convention.

8. Now, coming to the first point. It is seen that there are at least five distinct and heterogeneous elements of Hindu cultural tradition and Sikh historical practices that lie at the back of the melodrama which certain Sikh leaders have played recently, of going on a fast unto death and then easing out of it on some pretext or other. It is to commemorate the last of such acts that the structures under discussion have been raised.

9. Why are they called *havankunds* or *agnikunds* and why has not a definitive name been given to them ? The answer is that those who have raised them up have neither any educational background, nor they have the intellectual equipment to name correctly their confused antics, which they sub-consciously and vaguely wish to relate to some great tradition of the hoary past.

10. The five strains which have gone into this overstrained, silly and sentimental drama are the following :

11. Students of the *Mahabharata* will recall that on the eleventh day of the battle, Kaurvas, formulated a strategy of capturing Yudhishtra alive, and Drona, the Commander of the day, undertook to do so. The chief of the Pandvas, Arjuna, frustrated all attempts of the enemy to capture Yudhishtra alive, and thus, on the twelfth day of the battle, Karna told Duryodhana that Yudhishtra could not be captured alive as long as Arjuna was by his side. It was at this stage that the chief of Trigartas, the modern Himachal Pradesh and Jammu people, along with some of his chosen followers constituted themselves into a suicide-squad. In the ancient Indian tradition, going farther back than the *Mahabharata*, people who joined such a suicide squad through certain well established ceremonies, were called, *samsaptaks*, i.e. those under a solemn vow. The *Mahabharata* tells us that these *dogras*, for so they were, put on garments of matted grass and sat around the sacrificial fire, i.e. an *agnikund*. This is the ancestry of the *agnikunds* of the Akalis presently in control of the Gurdwaras. These *dogras* then calling upon the Fire-god as a witness vowed that they would either kill Arjuna or die in the attempt, adding, "If we flee in fear or otherwise remain alive but unsuccessful, may the penalties of the seven deadly sins visit us." Thereafter, these *samsaptaks*, performed their own obsequies or funeral rites. Then these *samsaptaks* got up and slowly walked towards the South, which is the direction of the *Yamaloka*, i.e. the Abode of Death. Having done this, these *samsaptaks* ran towards the battle-field, crying- "Arjuna, Arjuna", "O, Arjuna, O, Arjuna."

It is recorded in the *Mahabharata* that when Krishna drove the chariot of Arjuna towards these *samsaptaks*, the latter remarked "There Krishna, see the *Trigartas*, standing, cheerful under the high intoxication of their solemn oath, knowing that they go to certain death. Indeed they are full of high exaltation of the *swarga* at hand." Not a single *samsaptak* flinched or fled from the battle-field and not a single one of them returned alive to claim public acclaim and votes in his capacity as a *zinda shaheed*, living martyr.

12. This is the first element in the melodrama which the Akalis, presently in control of the Gurdwaras, have taken up as their own, but only after suitably modifying it to suit their personal convenience, retaining the word *agnikund* and the element of a 'vow' only.

13. Then there is an ancient and hoary Indian tradition of the Hindu priests, the Brahmins, that of spiritual blackmail by threatening to commit suicide unless a specific demand is met by the other party. Throughout the Indian history, and upto the middle ages, a large number of instances are on record, where a Brahmin made some demand or another, and threatened to die by burning himself alive or by starvation or some other means, unless this demand was met. In the event of the demand not being met, the Brahmin would invariably commit suicide as threatened and then the person responsible for causing the Brahmin to do so would be guilty of the most deadly sin, the *brahmhatiya*. No Hindu dare commit the *brahmhatiya* and thus the Brahmin would, almost always succeed in his demand. As late as the concluding decades of the 18th century, a Brahmin from a village near Kasur, threatened to burn himself alive on a wooden pyre, unless the Sikhs assembled at the Akal Takht, invested Kasur to rescue the Brahmin's daughter abducted by the Pathan Prince there. As the students of Sikh history know, the Khalsa yielded before this threat, and against heavy odds attacked Kasur and sacrificed over two thousand Sikhs to satisfy the Brahmin's bidding, but the Brahmin had his way and the Khalsa avoided

the *brahmhatiya* and in the bargain, upheld its royal titles and pretensions of being the Protector of the poor, *garibnivaj*, the Friend of the underdog, *nimanian-da-man*, and the Upholder of Righteousness, *dharam-rakhayik*. Out of this ancient Hindu cultural practice, Gandhi concludes special brand of fast-unto-death, and realising the basically selfish character of it, yoked it to *satyagraha*, postulating truth and altruism as a necessary prerequisite of the practice. Whatever its form, however, it rests on the assumption that the social relations and their ethical foundation constitute a common ground between the parties, and, in any case, undertones of coercion and blackmail can never be eliminated from such practices. Out of this tradition comes the second element of the drama certain Akali leaders have played in the recent past.

14. The third strain has been picked by these Akali leaders from out of the recent practice of certain devout Buddhists to burn themselves alive, at various places in South East Asia, to pin-point certain fundamental political controversies or issue. In these acts of self-immolation, there is never a prior proclamation of their intention to immolate and it is only after the gruesome deed is over that the public became aware that thereby the person sacrificing himself has pin-pointed a certain political controversy or issue asserting through a cheerfully accepted death, that the other party stands in immediate need of rethinking over his position on the issue. The operative ideas behind this type of self-immolation are two: one, that the self-immolating person, through his death, declares that he refuses to co-exist with that which is basically evil, namely, the stand taken up by the other party. The other, that he, by laying down his life, makes a moral exhortation to the other party to reconsider his erroneous stand. It is this third strain, and the high publicity that it necessarily causes which the present Akali leaders have incorporated in their antics of making loud noises about their determination to immolate themselves unless this or that condition is fulfilled.

15. The fourth strain in this affair comes out of the Sikh history itself. There is a firm tradition in the Sikh history of individuals and groups of Sikhs making a resolve to die fighting against a tyrant who interferes in their religion or way of life. Baba Deep Singh, Shaheed and Baba Gurbux Singh Shaheed, are the instances in point. The essence of this Sikh tradition is that it is meant to assert the fundamental Sikh right to tyrannicide at the cost of their own lives. In this Sikh tradition, there is no vow taken except a simple and impersonal declaration of the aim, accompanied by a humble prayer to the God Almighty, "to help His humble servant preserve his Sikh integrity with the last sacred hair of his head intact and till his last breath." *Sikkhi kesa swasan sang tor nibhaaee*. There is no turning back, in this Sikh tradition, on any pretext whatsoever and there is no desire for self-publicity or public acclaim. It is an irrevocable covenant between the Sikh and his Lord, the Akalpurkh. Both the principles and the methodology of the purely Sikh practice and tradition derive from the guidelines and "testament given by Guru Gobind Singh himself and it is not a derivative of or based on any previous Hindu or Semitic doctrine or tradition. The Sikh fundamental right to tyrannicide is explicit in the divinely sanctioned target of the Khalsa: "to destroy root and branch, injustice and tyranny along with those who practise them from the face of the earth" (*dharti sabhan kau mul upparan*). "ਦੁਸ਼ਟ ਸਭਨ ਕੋ ਮੂਲ ਉਪਾਰਨ". The methodology for its targetal accomplishment is laid in the Guru's injunction, "to die fighting on the battle-field, where the final issue is joined against the forces of evil". "ਜਬ ਅਦਿ ਤੇ ਅਉਧ ਨਿਦਾਨ ਬਨੈ ਅਤ ਹੀ ਰਨ ਮੇ ਤਬ ਜੂਝ ਮਰੇ॥"

16. Out of this Sikh tradition, the present Akali mimics have extracted their practice of performing *ardas* with solemn vows within the Golden Temple and before the Akal Takht, which vows are never intended to be kept from the very beginning and which vows are invariably made with some unbecoming mental reservation.

17. To these four strains extracted out of ancient Hindu cultural traditions and the history of the Sikhs, these neo-Akalis have grafted a fifth strain, to provide a base to the other four. This fifth strain comes out of basic atheism, agnosticism and nihilism of these Sikhs who know little of and are careless for Sikhism or what it stands for. Their basic creed is that this earth and the senses through which they perceive it is the only ultimate reality. Once their bellies are full and their primary eyes are catered to, they look upon the universe with the dull egos of contented beasts. It is their unshakable conviction that there is no intrinsic difference between truth and falsehood except that gullible people accept the first and reject the second. They are firmly persuaded that as long as they can get away with it everything is permissible. It is out of this total perversion of the Sikh creed that the utter lack of shame is born of those who have been indulging in these melodramatic antics, consisting of sacramental *ardas* and religious vows, leading to building of *agnikunds* and then seeking to perpetuate them as integral parts of the Golden Temple and the holy *Akal Takht*.

18. Being basically village rustics, without educational background or intellectual equipment, and being godless materialists, they lack the capacity to describe their antics and deeds in proper phraseology. They have heard the word, *havankund*, in which their neighbours, the Aryasamajists, throw good *ghee* and other sweet smelling substances, and they are persuaded that *havankund* is something good and respectable. That is why they have called these structures as *havankunds* in addition to *agnikunds*.

19. During the last three decades or so, the Sikh leadership has fallen into the hands of such people that it is difficult to say whether, in their words and deeds, it is buffoonery which predominates or baseness.

20. The Sikh masses have become altogether unconcerned to matters of quality or standards in public affairs. The present

condition of the Sikhs is not that of a people who have gone to sleep, which would be a tragedy anyhow, but which tragedy could be redeemed by sincere and earnest leaders. The tragedy of the Sikhs, at the moment, is that they are a people who have gone completely pervert and cussed.

21. Now, only a miracle can save them.

MANSUR AL-HALLAJ*

In a monthly magazine of standing it was stated recently that Mansur was "stoned to death."

Here is a brief story of this most remarkable man in human history, who was not "stoned to death," but subjected to unspeakably inhuman cruelties for the crime of having longed for a vision of God.

Islamic mysticism, called Sufism, has been variously traced to Chirstianity, Manichaeism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Parseeism. But Muslim mystics have always claimed, particularly after Mansur al-Hallaj was put to a cruel death, that Sufism is based on the Koran and *Hadith* only, and has no borrowings from extra-Islamic sources.

The Koran is often allegorical with a mystical touch. It defines Muslims in these words: "Those who believe in the Unseen, establish daily prayers and spend of what we have given them." (11.2)

As to the Unseen, it says that it is your own soul :

We are more nigh unto man than his own jugular vein. (L. 15)

Again, the essential nature of the Unseen is described as light:

God is the light of the Heaven and Earth. (xxiv.35)

This doctrine is reiterated in the Sikh Scripture as: sab main jot, jot hai soi.

Of these verses Sufis have developed pantheistic views about the reality behind all creation.

* Written in 1970.

In support of the authenticity of the *Hadith*, they quote the following verse of the Koran :

As we have sent a prophet to you from among yourselves, who reads our verses to you, purifies you, teaches you the Book and Wisdom, and also teaches you what you did not know before. (II. 146)

The history of Muslim mysticism, called Sufism, begins with Bayizid who died in A.D. 909. After him came Junayd, a native of Baghdad. About him not many stories are told though he was more revered than any other Sufi of his age. Describing his own mystical experiences, he once wrote that, "it is like a continual burning, a continual shaking of the foundations, a continual emptiness. In which nothing familiar is seen, unimaginable and unbearable in its fierce onslaught."

This description of the onset of mystical experiences has its parallels in the Guru Granth at more than one place, and in the yoga texts the description of the arising of the *Kundalini* power provides a corroboration of this process whereby the little ego of the individual breaks through its shell of self-centredness to unite with the universal Self.

About A.D. 880 there came to his school in Baghdad, a young scholar with inclinations towards mysticism and it was at once noted that he was extremely handsome, wore *two jibbas* and seemed to be lost in his dreams. When he first presented himself before Junayd, the latter said of him. "His blood will stain the gibbet."

This young man was Mughith al-Husayn bin Mansur bin Muhammad al-Baidawi al-Hallaj (A.D. 858-922) who was the grandson of a Persian follower of Zarathustra, and the son of a wool-carder, i.e. al-Hallaj. He was born at al-Tur near al-Baida, in the province of Fars, and the name of his grandfather was Sahabi abu Aiyub. After staying under the tutorship of Junayd for six years, al-Hallaj left for a pilgrimage to Mecca

where he spent full six years in the shadow of the inner sanctuary of this central holy place of Islam, the Kaaba. Throughout this long period of half a dozen years he never moved except for calls of nature, ritual circumambulations of the Kabba. He never slept but sometimes dozed and was altogether oblivious to the inclemencies of the weather of Arabia. Then he broke meditation and wandered through Gujrat and Kashmir down to India and later to the periphery of China which today we call Aksai Chin, the vast bleak area conquered by the Sikhs in 1842 and made a part of the sovereign Punjab of the Sarkar Khalsa and which is now occupied by China and thus excluded from the territories of the Union of India. In India he came in contact with teachers of Yoga from whom he learnt secrets of the *tantra* practices. There is no doubt that he acquired many supernatural powers called *siddhis*, through his yogic discipline in India.

On his own testimony, he saw the famous "rope trick" performed by a woman, a magic feat the secrets of which have altogether disappeared from the living traditions of Indian magic. Briefly, this "rope trick" performance was made in the following manner:

The magician, after a preliminary prologue to provide a context for the magical trick, would throw the end of a rope into the sky in open daylight, and before the public gathering. This rope would advance into the sky till its end vanished from sight and thus it would stay taut. At this stage the magician's assistant would ride up into the sky with the aid of this rope under the pretext of taking part in some fight or battle taking place in the sky, the noise of which would be duly audible to the gathering down below. Then, from out of the blue, severed limbs, bleeding and gory, of this human ascended up in the sky would fall to the ground one by one to the horror of onlookers. These limbs would then be gathered by the weeping magician who would put them under a basket. After a few incantations, this basket would be opened up and, to the relief of everybody, the person hacked

to pieces only a few moments before would come out alive, smiling and whole from under this basket.

This is the "rope trick" which al-Hallaj saw in India with his own eyes, performed by a woman at the close of the ninth century, and this trick was also seen by Emperor Jehangir at Agra in the 16th century, as testified by him in his *Tozak*. After that we come across no reliable written records of any testimony about, or witness having seen this magic trick.

On return from India to Baghdad, one day, while walking in the town streets, al-Hallaj casually plucked up an apple from nowhere, to the great surprise of his companions, and said that it was from a tree in Paradise. Though the writer of these lines has not himself witnessed it, he has it on credible evidence that there are people even today in India who are adapted in the *siddhi* of producing objects of wish from nowhere in broad daylight and before the eyes of the audience. In the *Yoga Sutra* of Patanjali this is mentioned (III.45) as one of the eight *Siddhis* a yogi may acquire, through appropriate concentration, the power "to create all things wished for, the power to bring about everything. "This particular apple produced by al-Hallaj was full of maggot holes which al-Hallaj explained as corruption produced in transit from the Mansion of Eternity to the House of Decay, from the *divyaloka* to the *mrityuloka*, as the Hindu yogi would say.

When the remarkable character of this man became noted by many serious-minded persons, it would usually happen that there were one or two scribes in his *entourage* when he strolled about in the streets of Baghdad. One day a scribe took down the following words uttered by him in an ecstasy of weeping, while he was wandering through the market square of the city :

O, hide me from the face of God ! God has ravished me from myself and will not give me back to myself and so I cannot praise Him. I am fearful of being

abandoned by Him. For, God made men out of simple charity and if He shines before men and sometimes wears a veil before men it is always so that men may be helped and if He did not shine all would deny His existence and if He did not veil Himself all would be spellbound ! And that is why he changes one to the other . As for me, there is no longer any veil, not so much as a wink between me and God ! And now is the time of my peace when my humanity will perish in His Divinity, my body consumed in the raging flames of His Omnipotence and then there will be no trace of me on earth, no relic of me, no face, no word.¹

When he became 50 years old he went into the mosque of al-Mansur and made enquiries about his friend whose name became eternally associated with his own name. This was Shibli, a Turkish nobleman and a famous poet. It is this Shibli who, when al-Hallaj was, before his execution, being paraded through the streets of Baghdad for public disapprobation and chastisement, threw a flower at him instead of a stone as the Royal orders demanded, and at the impact of which flower al-Hallaj wept copiously on the ground that Shibli at least should have known the spiritual secret and status of al-Hallaj and should not have hit him even with a flower.

Such, at least, is the legend that has come down as the most striking event of the last moments of al-Hallaj. In the memory of the public-*Shibli ne phul mare Mansur ro pukara*- "the flower of Shibli" has become a synonym for an act particularly unbearable when emanating from quarters who ought to have known better.

On coming before Shibli, al-Hallaj simply announced, "anal-Haq."

It is this pronouncement which ultimately became the legal justification for his cruel execution and this

1. Louis Massignon, *al-Hallaj-Martyr Mystique de L Islam*, Paris, 1922, Vol. II, p. 123.

pronouncement has been invariably interpreted in Muslim circles as a claim, by al-Hallaj, to Godhead. It was certainly a most serious crime, according to Muslim theology, the highest blasphemy, for a man, a creature and servant of God, to claim equality and identity with God. But a calmer and a more discerning interpretation and understanding of this pronouncement makes it clear that al-Hallaj was merely reiterating in Arabic the *mahavak* of the Upanisad: *aham brahman*. It does not amount to a claim to man being the equal of and wholly identical with God. It merely asserts that the fundamental essence of man is one with that of God. But *advaita* was not a well understood or tolerated doctrine in the orthodox Islam of those times, or ever.

Thus, al-Hallaj was accused of being a charlatan by the Mu'tazila sect, and excommunicated by a *fatwa* of Zahiriya sect.

At this time, when al-Hallaj made this fatal pronouncement, Shibli was surrounded by many of his disciples and thus this supposed blasphemy of al-Hallaj became widely known. But he fearlessly went about and wandered in the streets of Baghdad, for, the Queen Shaghah, the mother of the Caliph al-Muktadir and of the Vazier Hamid, the latter had al-Hallaj executed after a seven-month trial on a *fatwa* approved by Kadi Abu Umar of the Maliki sect favoured and revered him. Many other high officials of the Court of the Caliph also held him in high estimation.

At this stage, his meditations led him into the conviction that it was necessary for him "to die unto God." It is the same truth which is repeated in the Sikh Scripture and has become a part of the Sikh history as a necessary precondition of a successful initiation into the path of true Sikhism: *Jiwatia mar rahie*. "ਜੀਵਤਿਆ ਮਰ ਰਹੀਏ॥"

This insight into the heart of true initiation was interpreted by al-Hallaj literally when he tried to spell out to himself his intuitional knowledge, on the sophisticated and reflective level of his mind. He came to believe that it was necessary for

him to offer himself as a sacrifice, following the example of Jesus, so that he might thus enter into the Godhead at a moment of the highest ecstasy. Firm in this belief he entered, one day, the mosque of al-Mansur and addressed the people gathered there as follows:

God has made my blood lawful unto you. Therefore, kill me.

When he was asked by a bystander as to why they should kill him, he replied:

So that I may have peace and so that you may attain the status of the soldiers for the faith, *al-ghazi*. and I, that of a martyr, *shahid*.

But no one desired to kill him from amongst those gathered in the mosque.

The desire to kill him, however, was not altogether wanting in the realm of the Caliph.

A sect called Hambalites were the most fanatical citizens of the Caliph. They were the followers of the fundamentalist teacher Ahmad ibn Hambal (780-855). This Hambal regarded the doctrine of *Itihad*, identification of God with man, as the highest form of blasphemy. It was this Hambal who, for the first time, collected the sayings of Prophet Mohammad, called *Hadith*, which ever since has formed one of the valid and ultimate sources of Muslim jurisprudence.

At this stage it is interesting to compare the technique of immediate entry into the Godhead at a moment of mental single-pointedness which al-Hallaj had in mind when he called upon the worshippers at the Mosque of al-Mansur to kill him, with the almost similar technique enunciated by the Sikh martyr, Baba Gurbaksh Singh (d. 1763), who explained it to the Sikhs at Damdama Sahib (Punjab), that the genocide campaign of Ahmad Shah Abdali against the Sikhs could be halted through miraculous intervention of God only if a Sikh courted martyrdom, at a point of single minded ecstasy, which would take him directly to the presence of Guru Gobind Singh

on High, so as to enable him to beseech Divine intervention in favour of the Khalsa.²

A careful study of the last years of the state of faith of al-Hallaj reveals that his religion took colours of his Zoroastrian origin. He exulted, in Persian manner, in love with fire and flame, seeing in it a symbol of all life as a continual "dancing unto God." He made a model of the Kaaba, to walk around it, at his own residence and he declared that it was as good as the original for purposes of circumambulations. He frequently spoke of Mount Sinai, where Moses vanished into the Light of God, as a holier place than Mecca itself. He was moving invariably towards his own prognostication of his destiny when "God's finger would be stained with the lover's blood."

One of his compositions declares :

The perfume of Thy coming suffices to make me
despise all creations and Hell is nothing to the fire
within me when Thou desertest me. Forgive others, do
not forgive me.

There are contemporary records to show that when he spoke about his desire to die, he did not refer to a single motive; he suggested many motives as though his senses, his intelligence and his will-power had separately fused into a single, all-consuming desire :

Kill me my zealous friends, for my
death is a coming into life,
My life is dying and death and
my death is an awakening,
My greatest Gift, the Gift of
gifts, is an annihilation of my being.³

2. Rattan Singh Bhangoo, *Prachin Panth Prakash*, 1843, Wazir Hind Press Amritsar, 1914, p. 513.

3. *Hocien Mansur Hallaj, Diwan'tr* : Louis Massignon, Paris, 1955 (Edition des cahiers du sud), p. 27.

Again,

Tis the worst of crimes-to live a little longer,
And all the corporate bits of my being
Shall be transmuted into air, fire, power, water.
To be sown by the seedsman into the dried soil.
And let the dancing girls pour wine and water on my
fields.
In the space of seven days a perfect flower shall come to
birth.⁴

Suddenly, under the mounting pressure of Hambalites, orders were passed for his arrest and on hearing of it Mansur al-Hallaj escaped to Susa.

For three years he wandered about *incognito* but in A.D. 911 the police pounced upon him and brought him back to Baghdad in chains where he was put into prison without being charge-sheeted. But soon after, "the good Vazier" celebrated in the Arabian Nights, Ali ibn Musa, by name, enquired into charges brought by Hambalites against the accused and the Vazier found that the crime of blasphemy had not been committed. But he condemned him as a heretic and a charlatan. He ordered to have his beard cut off, to have him beaten with the flat of the sword and to have him exposed for four days on the pillory and then to keep him in prison in chains till further orders.

These punishments were duly carried out, but, in prison, he was treated with respect. A special building was erected for him as an outhouse of the prison enclosure, with a gate leading to a courtyard where he could preach to the Prisoners. The walls of the new house were covered with carpets as would be in the case of a house prepared for the residence of a nobleman or a grandee and he was allowed to receive visitors and to keep servants. In this state he remained in prison for two years when Caliph al-Muktadir seemed to be dying of a fever. Mansur al-Hallaj was brought to the palace

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

and lodged in a room adjacent to that of the Caliph. The Queen mother visited him frequently and from his lips learnt the secrets of transmigration and divine incarnation, *hulul*, *avtarat*, the incarnation of God in human form. A host of other visitors came to marvel or to listen to his low-toned quiet sermons which he preached with downcast eyes and sitting cross-legged, Hindu-fashion on the floor. He was sometimes seen to swell out until he filled the whole room. This miraculous power is a *Sidhi* referred to in the text on Yoga as *mahima*. At other times, a handkerchief dropped by him walked back to his sleeves, an extra-psychic power called *parakinesis*. He was able to foretell future and knew of the secrets of the past and present, i.e. he was a *trikal-darsi* in the technical language of the Yoga Sutra of Patanjali (III. 16).

He acquired fabulous reputation and was greatly venerated and his fame spread far and wide during this period and he was regarded by thousands the *Imami-makhafi*, i.e. the Hidden Lord of the Age.

In shi'ite Islam there is the doctrine of the *Imami-makhafi* which postulates the presence of the spiritual viceregent of Hadrat Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, in a hidden form, in every age and for ever, to watch over the interests of the Islamic community and to provide true guidance to it when it is sorely needed.

But the Caliph, his Vazier, Hamid, and Munis, the Greek eunuch, who had risen to the exalted position of the Commander of the Army, entertained grave fears of the growing power and agitation of the Hambalites, who were threatening action, on the outskirts of Baghdad, and quite suddenly, at the end of a feast given in honour of Munis the drunken Caliph was persuaded to sign the order of execution of Mansur al-Hallaj.

The next morning the news of his death warrant was duly communicated to al-Hallaj in his prison and the day following was fixed for his execution. This was Tuesday, the 24th of the lunar month of *dulkada*.

On the night before his execution, al-Hallaj went through his customary ritual prayers performing also two special prostrations in the direction of Mecca. Afterwards, he became silent. Thus he sat for quite a long time and someone present heard him say, "Illusion, all this is illusion."

He kept repeating off and on, for half the night with a look of despair on his face, as though he felt that his sacrifice was to be in vain, but towards dawn he bounded to his feet and shouted, "al-Haq, al Haq" (the Truth, the Truth). He put on his turban, donned his *jibba* cloak, stretched out his arms and, while facing Mecca, fell into an ecstasy and talked with God.

He spoke of the splendours awaiting him and of how his mortal body had been fashioned in the shining image of God and how at last he was being tested in the furnace of his desire. He rendered thanks to God for having been permitted to utter the sacred words "al Haq" by which he entered Creation. "Surely," he said, "who am Thine incense shall rise again." And then he went to speak in extempore verse :

I cry to God: Sorrow over *Thy witness*.

who now departs into the Beyond to welcome the witness of *Eternity*.

I cry to God: Sorrow over the hearts bedewed in vain with the waters of revelation and the ocean of Wisdom

I cry to God: Sorrow over the Word which is lost and whose meaning is void in the mind.

I cry to God: Sorrow over thy love and for the goodness of Thy servants whose hearts were continually ready to obey :

For all have crossed away beyond the deserts leaving no footprints nor watering places. And the abandoned herd runs behind blinder than the beasts, blinder than a flock of sheep.⁵

At this stage the personal servant of al-Hallaj, Ibrahim,

⁵ *Diwan, op.cit.*, p. 14.

asked for a keepsake as a sacred memento to remind him of the holy man after his death. He cryptically answered, "I give you yourself."

When the sun rose in the morning, all his bitterness against the "blind beasts" was gone and he went laughing and cheerfully to the execution-ground near the new prison on the right bank of the Tigris, opposite the Bab al-Tak gate, a place in close proximity to the Guru Nanak memorial platform, marking the halting spot of the Guru when he visited Baghdad in A.D. 1520. One of the multitude following the condemned man to the execution ground asked him why he was laughing and his answer was "From the caresses of infinite Beauty."

When he saw the gibbet, he laughed still louder and went on laughing.

To some people near him, in the huge crowd present in the execution-ground, he announced calmly: "I shall return in thirty days."

Standing underneath the gibbet he spied his friend Shibli, and from him he borrowed the prayer-rug and performed the offices of those about to be executed. Then, he said very calmly:

Those who adore Thee, O God, have assembled here to kill me out of their love for Thee so that they may come closer unto Thee. Forgive them, O Lord! if Thou hadst revealed to them what Thou hast revealed to me, they would not have done what they have done, and if Thou hadst concealed from me what Thou hast concealed from them I should not have suffered tribulations. Power and glory unto Thee in whatsoever Thou wilt.⁶

Such was his last prayer on earth and it is decidedly the most beautiful he ever uttered, and, perhaps, the most beautiful ever uttered by a believer.

6. Massignon, *al-Hallaj*, p. 1303.

A moment later he rose to face the executioner who dealt him a heavy blow between his eyes with an iron mace which smashed his forehead skull and caused the blood stream out of his nose. Shibli shrieked and tore off his clothes and fell into a swoon and the crowd howled "The wild beasts !"

To begin with, his skull was smashed; then he was severly scourged with barbed iron chains. In the midst of this punishment he calmly spoke to the executioner : "My friend, I have good tidings for thee, relax a little and listen". But the executioner, fearing that al-Hallaj might bewitch him by uttering some magical incantation, continued scourging.

This lasted for quite a while till al-Hallaj was physically exhausted and fainted. Then his hands and feet were cut with a sword and his body was roped to the gibbet and coaltar was applied to his bleeding stumps to prevent him from bleeding to death, so that his agony be prolonged and made as severe as possible.

All these cruelties were over by time the sun had risen about the length of one rope. One might say it was about 11a.m. by this time.

All day long al-Hallaj hung there on the gibbet uttering not a cry, and heaving not a sigh, and saying not a word. It was observed that his face was calm and ruddy.

When the sun was well down, a messenger came from the Caliph giving permission for his head to be struck off, but one of the officers present said that it was already too late and that execution was not permissible after sunset.

Thus, it was decided that the final act should wait until the next morning.

At sunrise, the next day, March 26th of the year 922 A.D., al-Hallaj was lifted barely conscious from the gibbet and deposited on a leather mat which was already spread for the purpose a few feet away. Someone heard him moan: "All I have longed for...the vision of God."

At this moment the sword of the executioner descended to strike off his head. The body was; thereafter, rolled up in

a strip of reed matting, soaked in naphtha. It was then set to fire on the spot.

Later, the head was exposed on the Great Bridge at Baghdad and the ashes were taken up to a minaret of a nearby mosque and were scattered to the winds.

But this was not the last of Mansur al-Hallaj. The Caliph remembered him for the curse that lay upon him and Baghdad too remembered him as it slowly moved into the shadows of decay to lose its status as imperial capital. Munis also remembered him when he was to die only a few years later in the palace prison, charged with treason, and ending his life with his throat held over the gutters of the prison while it was slit with a razor.

The Queen Mother kept the balmed head of the saint in the palace treasury.

The Sufis wrote about him endlessly and Maulana Rumi celebrates him in his poems. The towering Muslim Philosophers al-Ghazali and Ibn al-Arabi wrote about him at length giving expositions of his sayings and maxims as if he were another Mohammad come to the world from God on High to provide guidance to mankind. For most thinkers and intellectuals of Islam throughout the ages, Tusi, Shustri, Amili, Ibn Akila, Saiyid Murtada, Razi, Ibn Tufail, Ibn Ata, Shibli, Sulami, Kushairi, Hudjwiri, Abu Said, Harawi, Abd al-Kadir Gilani, Attar Ibn al-Arabi, Abd al-Karim Djili, to mention only a few, have extensively written and commented upon him. In far off lands, Bengal, Java and Ottoman Turkey, people raised temples in his honour. Among European scholars different verdicts have been passed upon him. Herbelot thinks him to be secretly a Christian, Rejeske accuses him of blasphemy; Kremer makes him out to be a monist, Kazanski thinks he was a neuropath. Brown is persuaded that he was an able and dangerous intriguer, Halaladi argues that he endeavoured to bring dogma into harmony with Greek philosophy on a basis of mystic experience and that, in this, he was; a precursor of al-Ghazali.

Such was this man who once wrote : "If the sun should rise at night, the dawn of hearts will have no setting." This is reminiscent of the description of a perfected yogi in the *Bhagvadgita*: *ya nisa sarvabhutana tassyam jagriti samyami* (II. 61) (That which is the pitch dark night of the world of phenomena in that is awakened that perfected yogi).

The doctrines perfected in his name by his followers, al-Hallajia, held that in ceremonial *Islam*, *Sikh*, all the five imperatives, the *faraid* including the pilgrimage to Mecca could be replaced by other works. In Metaphysics, God's transcendence (*tanzih*) was interpreted as Divine Spirit above the limits of Creation, somewhat analogous to the reference in the *Purusasukta* of the *Rig Veda* to the uncreated three-fourths of the *Purusa* (X. 90.3) It is with this uncreated Divine Spirit that the perfected Sufi becomes united thus becoming a personal witness of God, whence the saying, *anal-Haq* "I am the Creative Truth."

Although, the *ijma*, the consensus of the Islamic Jurisconsults have condemned him, the popular devotion has canonized him and Sufis have made him their martyr *par excellence*.

Of his works there remain the *Kitab al-Tawasin*, 26 quatrains of the year 902, and 400 fragments in prose as well as 150 in verse of rare beauty.

CRISIS IN SIKH LEADERSHIP*

Sikhism is a distinct religion in the World, and in its own right, it is not a sect of Hinduism, and the Sikh society is likewise a distinct society having its own postulates of social organizations, and also, the Sikh people legitimately aspire to political sovereignty and an autonomous status, such as they had acquired in the eighteenth century after making tremendous sacrifices and which they lost in the middle of the nineteenth century through a combination of malevolent circumstances and inner weakness of their own political structure.

These points must be borne in mind before we come to consider whether Sikhism, as an independent world religion, is viable in the modern world, and whether the Sikh people have now in view some definite political goal, and lastly, whether such a goal is possible of being achieved.

Many people seem to have already forgotten that Shiromani Akali Dal, which is the central executive committee of the permanent political party, called the Khalsa Panth, in its Annual All India Session held at Ludhiana in November, 1966, unanimously passed the following resolution which *inter alia*, says that:

"The Sikhs resolve and proclaim their determination to resist all attempts being made to devalue and liquidate the Sikh people in free India. And demand that the rulers of India should take the following steps forthwith to assure and enable the Sikhs to live as respectable and equal citizens of the Union

* Speech at Patiala on 1st June, 1971.

of India, namely: *First*, the Sikh areas deliberately and intentionally cut off and not included in the new Punjab, namely, the areas of Gurdaspur District including Dalhousie, of Ambala District including Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka and Ambala Saddar, of Hoshiarpur District, the entire Tehsil of Una, and the Desh area of Nalagarh Tehsil, and the Sirsa Sub-Division of Hissar District and areas of Shahbad, Tohana and Guhla and Ratia Block of Karnal District, and the Ganganagar area of Rajasthan, must be immediately included in the new Punjab so as to bring all contiguous Sikh areas into an administrative unit, to be called the "Sikh Homeland", within the Union of India, and *Second*, this new Punjab should be granted an autonomous constitutional status with same powers and privileges as were granted to Jammu and Kashmir, in 1950, in the Constitutional Act of India should further concede that in this Sikh Homeland Sikh interests are of special importance."

This is the political goal which the Shiromani Akali Dal placed before the Sikh people in the changed circumstances of India, but almost simultaneously a split occurred in its organization and eventually the dissident group organized under Sant Fateh Singh succeeded in taking control of the Sikh gurdwaras in Punjab and also capturing such Sikh representatives as they could, in the Indian Parliament as well as in the Punjab Legislative Assembly. This new group then completely abandoned all claims to any political aspirations for the Sikh people as such and strove for retaining the control of Gurdwaras and for forming a government in the newly truncated Punjab in which the representatives of this group may have an effective voice.

To achieve and retain this position, this group not only elbowed out the genuine Shiromani Akali Dal which had remained loyal to the true historical impulses of the Sikh people but these men also abandoned and repudiated openly every pretension of any concern for either making Sikhism or Sikh people viable in the modern world. They do not believe

that politics is a vocation for those who would achieve and advance public good, because they are convinced that politics is a game for squeezing the maximum amount of personal gain for those who enter its arena.

It is at this stage that the Sikh people find themselves at the present moment. In the fateful year of 1947, the Sikhs had a good opportunity of acquiring for themselves a sovereign or an autonomous status in the Indian sub-continent such as could enable them to walk into the mainstream of the World history, but such was the incompetence of the leadership that they had thrown up and sustained during those days that all the friends and well-wishers of the Sikhs were unanimous in concluding that the Sikh leadership had lost the battle of the negotiation table which they had been conceded by the contingency of history.

Ian Stephens, who was a good-hearted Englishman, editing, during this fateful period, the powerful English daily of Calcutta and Delhi, *The Statesman*, wrote in his book, *Pakistan*, (1963) that:

"So far as the Sikhs understood what was happening in 1947, which was not much, was not taken advantage of by the Sikh leadership, which was in the hands of non-Jat Khatri. The Khatri Sikhs are seldom politically wise though much given to intrigue..."

Trying to explain the reasons for this unfortunate situation, the author observed that "In modern times (the Sikhs') political leadership has mostly been poor, partly because their numbers are small, but also because their talents are of a markedly practical go-getting sort. As a result of this second factor, their ablest men, the cream of the community, are continually skimmed off into lucrative activities outside politics..... Politics amongst Sikhs, has, in recent years, got not much more than the leavings: Others, more stern but less concerned spoke out the same-truth but in a different language. H.V. Hodson, the Constitutional Adviser of Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India during the years immediately

preceding 1947, in his well-documented book, *The Great Divide*, (1969) observes that on the approach of the Transfer of Power, the Sikhs who mattered were not those in ordinary politics but men with influence in and through the gurdwaras. They had neither the training nor the experience to cope with the problems of partition. Ill-versed in national politics, divided in their attitude, the Sikhs reverted to a historical posture of only defence and defiance." He wrote further :

"Time and again the powers that were in the Central Government of India complained of political incompetence of the Sikhs."

Hodson coolly dismisses the entire tragedy relating to the political fate of the Sikhs in the mid-twentieth century by saying, that,

"The Cabinet Mission persisted in regarding the Sikhs, perhaps, because of their wagging beards and political naivete, as pathetic misguided dotards who were behaving like silly children."

Why does such a terrible fate overtake the otherwise active, dynamic, sober and practical minded Sikh people again and again ? In the fifth decade of nineteenth century, this chronic political incompetence of the leadership thrown up and sustained by the Sikhs lost them their empire and sovereignty within seven or eight years of the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and again in 1947 it lost them an opportunity which the History may take another hundred years to offer to the Sikhs.

Ian Stephens gives out an explanation but this would not satisfy those who know the political affairs of Sikhs from inside and somewhat more intimately. There is something inherently fatal in the make-up of political consciousness of the Sikhs which does not let them submit to an inferior political status of camp-followers and secondary citizens but which also renders them incapable of throwing up and sustaining an honest, dedicated and competent political leadership.

SIKH DEMOCRACY

The Sikh society was founded on principles of democracy by Guru Gobind Singh and their overall political impulses have been of democratic nature.

Sir George Campbell, the author of the *Memories of My Indian Career*, (London, 1840) has rightly observed that :

The Sikh (socio-political) system is very much like that out of which German system sprang. They formed *Misls* or military confederacies. Each *Misl* elected its own supreme chief and sub-chiefs. The combined *Misls* formed the Khalsa or the Sikh Commonwealth.

Now, it is the kind of structure that can compare favourably with the impulses that led to Anglo-Saxon and American political institutions and yet in the case of the Sikhs, it, twice in history, has led to chaos and collapse instead of development and fruition.

CANCEROUS MALADY

This is because of a basic malady that afflicts the historical Sikh people, that is, the ethnic groups and tribes that embraced Sikhism in the north of India.

This basic malady is two-fold. In the first place, for reason of a complex historical and racial character, the Sikhs interpret the democratic process not as the Greeks or Germans interpreted it and not as the Anglo-Saxon communities interpret it. The latter mean by the democratic process a process wherein the pros and cons of a subject and situation are freely discussed and thoroughly probed into and then, after honestly and carefully taking into consideration the arguments advanced, and the facts ascertained, the majority concur in agreeing that such and such decision or course of action is in the best interests of the collectivity of their people.

Amongst the Sikhs, the practice is not to try to arrive at the best decision but to try to achieve a consensus on the spot. It is

customary to hear this type of argument in assemblies and forums of the Sikhs "It is obvious that what Mr. A says is the right thing and it is the best course to follow in the circumstances. But we have to work together and particularly we must ensure that 'so and so' and 'so and so' are not estranged. These 'so and sos' are adamant that what they have said also must be accepted. Otherwise, they feel that they are regarded as nobodies in the community. Let us, therefore, accept apart of what Mr. A has said and some portions of what 'so and sos' have said so that every body feels that his opinion has prevailed. And let this be our unanimous decision 'bole so nihal, sat sri akal.'

Under this procedure, as can be readily understood, it is the silliest and the worst decision, that usually comes to prevail because this perverted democratic temper of the Sikhs puts a premium on the fool, the vulgar, the traitor, and the intriguer. If merits and dispassionate consideration is not the final test of a correct decision and it has to be the consensus wherein everyone, particularly every undesirable rogue, has not only equality of opportunity, but equality of effectiveness, then it is obvious that this type of democratic process shall inevitably lead to chaos and disaster for the Sikhs, again and again.

This is what happened to the Sikhs more than once during the last one century and more.

LOW-GRADE SIKH LEADERSHIP

Secondly, there is the factor to which an allusion has been made by Ian Stephens namely, the capturing of Sikh leadership by a class of people who make up their lack of wisdom in politics by unmitigated proclivities for personal intrigue. This has brought about irretrievable degeneration in the Sikh norms in every sphere of their group activities: religious, social and political.

THE SIKH PRESS

The Sikh Press, such as it is, is in the hands of those who

are leaving the Sikh society in every sense of the term. They are such persons who did not and could not make good in any other sphere of life. Of course, it is not true of the entire Press, but it is true of the Sikh press in general, and it is these people and those who work as their tools who have wrought havoc in the Sikh affairs during the last three or four decades and have brought the community to the brink of total collapse and degeneration. These spies have neither background nor integrity and yet they are the opinion makers and leaders-makers in the Sikh community .

This point can be clearly stated only through concrete illustrations and one or two are, therefore, given below:

(1) The political goal of the Sikh Homeland, within the Union of India, to ensure religious viability of the Sikhs in the modern world, and political guarantee of their significance in the current history, was openly repudiated by the non-genuine Shiromani Akali Dal in "the seventh decade of this century and the dimly-lit torch of true Sikh politics was carried forth only by one or two adamant individuals backed by the Sikh youth and such honest sections of the Sikh people who had been elbowed out of the religious and political organization, the Shiromani Akali Dal. These adamant individuals, only one or two in number, happened to belong to the Jat group of the Sikhs with the town-living non-jat Sikhs who had migrated to India in 1947, from trans-Jhelum areas, look down upon with ill-concealed contempt. During the last year or so a well-conceived campaign was set up in the Sikh press by these non-Jats under the inspiration and leadership of the political-minded daughter of the late Master Tara Singh, who has now usurped control of the daily Jathedar which was established out of public funds for sponsoring Sikh causes.

This campaign has followed two lines. One, that so and so the protagonist of the Sikh Homeland political objective of the Sikh people is secretly conspiring with the enemies of the Sikh community. This was asserted again and again and distorted incidents were marshalled in support.

Simultaneously, an oral campaign was launched, in the towns of Punjab and in Delhi, with the following argument which illustrates the type of intrigue to which Ian Stephens has referred. The argument has been that, 'although so and so, the protagonist of the Sikh Homeland, is an educated person and understands the theory and art of politics well, and it is also true that he has the interests of the Sikhs at heart and has suffered for his convictions, but the real issue involved is that by lending him recognition and support we are letting the leadership of the community pass into the hands of the Jats. This would be most improper. Let us, therefore, withdraw all support from him and in future refuse to lend any open support to his views and activities, and let us also malign him to elbow him out of public affairs of the Sikhs.'

It would not be easy for outsiders to understand this phenomenon but it is so that amongst the Sikhs this type of argument and this type of intrigue prevails and is, as a rule, successful.

(2) There is a Sikh Weekly run from Delhi by a young man, whose educational qualifications do not go beyond pre-University stage. He is, on paper, an extreme protagonist of a State in the north of India in which the decision making powers rest in the hands of the Sikhs, though the practical role he has played in relation to Sikh politics on recent critical occasions, may qualify him for being tied to stake before a firing squad of some Sikh revolutionary regime. He specializes in foul language and skill in mobsterism and is publicly proud of these attainments. Recently, with the object of elbowing out a sensitive Jat protagonist of the Sikh Homeland, this young newspaper thug started tarnishing his image in the following manner. He argued editorially and otherwise in his paper that 'this jat was most unreliable and treacherous to the cause of Sikhs because, on a particular no-confidence motion in the Punjab Assembly in June, 1970, he failed to vote for the Opposition, while the Chief Minister of Punjab is Parkash Singh Badal, an Akali, who is opposed to the demand for Sikh

Homeland.' This, he argued, was a conclusive proof of the fact that this Jat intellectual was not only traitor to the cause of the Sikh community but was shown as a most insincere and unreliable character. It is not that this blatantly dishonest argument with undertones of blackmailing has been advanced in the Sikh Press. Such a thing can happen amongst any people and anywhere in the East or West, but in no community of sane and mature people, will, such an argument be allowed to prevail or go unchallenged because the principle of this argument is as follows: 'If somebody wants to uphold the true political goal of the Sikhs, namely, the demand for Sikh Homeland, then, he must, whether in or out of the Parliament or a Legislative Assembly, always and invariably oppose every proposal or motion which directly or indirectly might be in the interests of those who are not in favour of Sikh Homeland'. Now, this is the argument of a lunatic or somebody worse than a lunatic, yet amongst the Sikhs it will almost certainly go unchallenged and might even gather a large number of adherents. Those who see through the vicious character of such tactics are mostly disinclined to join issue with the intriguers and irresponsible thugs, and in any case they remain ineffective.

(3) There is a Weekly Sikh paper, published from Bombay in which, apparently under the instigation of its non-jat editor, a free-lance political worker who has nicknamed himself as, "Nidharak" or 'the Unscrupulous', wrote out a two-column tirade recently, arguing that, 'the so and so Jat protagonist of the Sikh Homeland demand had dishonestly betrayed the Sikhs and the evidence of this betrayal is that in February, 1971 on such and such date, Sant Fateh Singh opposed the Homeland demand and yet this Jat failed to make a counter-statement in the Press.'

This thesis requires a lengthy dissertation to establish it clearly, but such is the malady that afflicts the political consciousness and understanding of the Sikhs that although they are a historical people, having a distinct religion and

culture, and having all the characteristics of a political nation except the political autonomy which they have lost and have not been able to regain, they are almost on the verge of political extinction, according to many observers.

THE REMEDY

Those amongst the Sikhs, who would understand the true nature of the tragedy and who would also appreciate that in order to be viable in the modern world, the Sikhs must fulfil two conditions: firstly, they must interpret their world religion in an idiom which is understandable to the modern educated man and secondly, they must define, proclaim and try to achieve a political autonomy which can guarantee the preservation and development of their political personality, must put their heads together to cure the community of the two ills that have eaten into the vitals of the Sikh people for the past many years. These two ills have been stated above as (i) the supremacy of the unscrupulous, the incompetent, and the *thug*, in Sikh public affairs, and (ii) absence of declaration and even open disavowal of their true political goal by their spokesman.

Either, the Sikhs must cure themselves of these two ills or they must accept the fates that have now almost overtaken them, namely, their passing out of the mainstream of History and their extinction as a living and vital force in the affairs of the world community. If the Sikhs would not make all-out efforts to rid themselves of the cancerous maladies that afflict them, even the Guru-on-High will not care to extend His helping hand to save them from certain disaster.

CALL TO SIKH YOUNG MEN

Young men of the Khalsa Brotherhood! These then are the tasks that claim your immediate attention: firstly to meet the challenge that the incompetent and unscrupulous persons in Sikh public life have thrown before the Khalsa. This

challenge must be met on all levels, wherever these anti-Sikh forces raise their ugly heads, in private conversation and public discussion, in press or on platform, in direct speech or through insinuation. All intrigues aimed at holding the genuine Sikh voice to blackmail and subjecting it to devaluation and distortion must be countered with promptitude and vigour of which youth alone is capable. As Guru Gobind Singh advised, where you find that these *thugs*, are not inclined to listen to the language of reason and persuasion, you must not hesitate to speak in the language that they more readily understand. Such is the exhortation which the Rider of the Blue Horse has made to the Khalsa.

Secondly, the burden has now fallen on the shoulders of the Sikh youth to replenish the flame of true political aspirations of the Sikhs in India and to carry forth the torch of demand for Sikh Homeland as defined in the resolution of the Shiromani Akali Dal at Ludhiana in November 1966. Where the older generation has faltered and collapsed, the younger generation must rise up and march forward.

Lastly, the intellectuals amongst you must strive and strain to remove and clear up vast clouds of misunderstanding that distort the attitude of non-Sikh Indian fellow-citizens towards the political yearnings of the Sikhs. This removal of misunderstanding must not be achieved through false denials and untruthful disavowals in the fashion of some of our present day leaders, through unconvincing and deceitful utterances disclaiming my desire for achieving Sikh political objectives, by calling yourselves, 'Punjabis' instead of 'Sikhs' and by dishonestly eschewing public mention of Sikh political concepts of 'Panth' and 'Raj karega Khalsa'.

A firmer and truer understanding must be achieved between the Sikhs and their fellow citizens in India by patiently convincing the latter that the former aim at nothing more than salvaging their own politico-historical identity within the constitutional framework of an integrated India and a united nation and that sole desire of the Sikhs is to nourish and develop their own distinct spiritual

personality so as to serve India and to become a significant limb of the world community. Fissiparousness and secession, divisiveness and discord is repugnant to the teachings of Gurus and is alien to Sikh genius.

These are the formidable, yet enchanting tasks that beckon today the Sikh youth towards an organized life of dedication and service.

FOUR HIGH SEATS OF SIKH AUTHORITY*

There are and legitimately remain only four High Seats of Sikh Authority, the Takhts and a recent innovation of fifth takht set up by ignorant heresiarchs and new controllers of the official Board of Management of the Sikh historical shrines (S.G.P.C.) is altogether repugnant to and unwarranted by the true Sikh doctrine or the metaphysical postulates and mythological traditions of India.

Takht is a Persian word signifying 'the imperial throne,' a concept of, total and all pervasive focus of worldly temporal power such as was supposed to inhere in the *shahinshah*, the emperor, of the Achaemenian throne. Ex-hypothesis there cannot be more than one *takht* in the empire and indeed, in the entire world, for, a true and logically whole empire must tend to acquire a total oecumenical sway and the doctrine of co-existence of more than one *takht*, which is a true *Takht*, is a self stultification. But since the Sikh doctrine of Double Sovereignty, *miri-piri* envisages a sway over the minds and souls of mankind, the entire world, does not contemplate a coercive bondage of the bodies of men, it validates and promulgates a plurality of *takhts*, coexistent, coeval and complementary.

These *takhts*, thrones of Double Sovereignty spring from a Hindu tradition of religious dominion which is grounded in metaphysical postulates of ancient acceptance.

Dominion of religion in the world of phenomena is

* TSR-Dec. 1971.

bound up with the concept of 'space' and the Hindu 'space' is a flat four directional extension innocent of Einsteinian curvature of depth impregnated into it by the progression of 'Time'. This Hindu 'pure space' is conceptual *samkalapbhu*, detached from the progression of 'time'. This 'space' is four-directional, east, west, north, south. It is this 'space' in which is encompassed the entire phenomenal world, *samsar*, the reality that is appearances and the religion as it impinges upon the minds of men while it is permanently there in the souls of all men, flourishes in relation to his space; The spread and sway of religion in this world, therefore, must be comprehended and described as four directional.

Again, 'numbers' occupy a prominent place in Hindu occultism and the concept of 'numbers' permeates a great deal many branches of Hindu speculation. Infinities are particular fascination, circumscribed in cyclic concepts of Time and cosmic ages of the universe. The branch of knowledge, Numerology, *ganati*, is conceived as a branch of Ontology, and the numeral '1', as the first signature and word in the Sikh scripture is grounded in this modality of Hindu metaphysical thought.

According to this Hindu Numerology, while the symbol 'zero', *sunya*, being the absence of all, comprises all things, the number, 'one' is the number of Divinity, of the fundamental symbol, *lingam*, of the Sun, signifying brightness, light, unity, wisdom. Number 'four' in this system of thought is the perfect number, as it represents all the four directions of the space. *Satpath-brahman* tells us that, 'as the cow requires four feet, so the *yajna*, sacrifice must have four Vedas and four officiants'. Commenting on the description of the 'mind stuff in the Upanishads as, *chaturpada*, Samkara, explains, "like the four feet of a cow."

These concepts about the nature of the 'space' and numerological significations are then linked-up with the spread and sway of religion in the world in the Hindu tradition and history, and that explains why whenever a

Hindu sect or denomination of religion has laid claim to oecumenical status, it has set up or recognized four chief primary places of its reverential foci. In the Guru Granth it is to this mode of understanding of the matter that a reference exists to the omnipotent, omnipresence of God : "ਚਤੁਰ ਦਿਸਾ ਕੀ ਬਲੁ ਅਪਨਾ ॥" (*Dhanasri*, V) and it is according to this mode of thought that in the ancient Vedic tradition four *raj tirath*, royal centres of holiness, were recognized, such as Pushkarna, Prayagraj, Katasraj etc. to each of which one of the cardinal directions E, W, N or S was assigned. Likewise in Brahmanism *chaturdham*, four residences of the gods, Prayag (E), Dwarkavati (W), Badrinath (N) and Ramesvaram (S) are recognized. Sankaracharya established *chaturmath* four abbeys, to represent his true interpretation of Vedas, Vedanta, such as Jagan-math (E), Dwarkamath (W) Badrimath (N) and Sringerimath (S). Of Vaishnavite Hinduism, there are recognized *chaturpuri*, the four holy towns, beloved of the God, Jagannath Puri, Dwarkapuri and so on. Gautam, the Buddha before his *mahaparinirvan*, the great demise, specified four places, that of his birth, his enlightenment, his first Sermon and his demise as the places worthy of homage for the Buddhists, Lumbanivan, Gaya, Sarnath and Kusinar representing four directions of the Hindu 'space' and hence signifying oecumenical claim.

Again, there are recognized two categories of holy places in our Hindu tradition, *sthat* established or appointed and *svayambhu*, ever-there, self-existent. A centre of holiness may be set up or created by historical accident, association or appropriate ceremonies, or it may be there since the beginning of creation but may be discovered through a sign, or authoritative pointing out. There are temples of Vishnu and Siva of hoary antiquity that were so discovered through a royal dream or yogic flash and then magnificent buildings and idols were set up there, and there are temples that were definitely 'established' at a contingent point of time.

It is in this context that the significance and validity of *char takht*, the Four seats of Sikh authority, must be appreciated.

These takhts do not originate and are not validated by historical occurrence, though they may be accidentally associated with the birth or sojourn of a Sikh Guru or it may be the case, that as Akal Takht, it was 'built-up' and signified by, Sikh Guru. These takhts essentially are and remain *svayambhu*, ever-there and no body or no contingent occurrence has created them.

There cannot be more than Four Takhts because '4' is a perfect number, oecumenical in signification and grounded in the ancient metaphysical postulates of our race, while number, '5' is not a perfect number, and it is not a signifier of 'space' or territory while a takht must be such a signifier '5' reduces much diversity to meaningful measure, and hence signifies men and things, *panchajana*, *panchatattava*, *panchagarya* etc. and 'panj-takht' is a wholly unwarranted concept.

Nor does the word, "takht" inscribed on some seal used by the keepers of a historical Sikh shrine, such as occurs in the seal preserved at Damdama Sahib in Punjab, can make the place a takht a 'seat of Sikh authority' of the category to which the traditional four Takhts belong. In this seal, the word, "takht" occurs in its dictionary meaning, in the sense that a royal personage, technically a Sikh Guru, rested, sat or held audience here. Indeed, the inscription on this particular seal itself makes the matter quite clear when it says that it is the seal pertaining to "takht, jagah Guru Gobind Singh ji " that is, 'the throne-locus of the place where Guru Gobind Singh stayed.' On the basis of such a citation to declare the holy Sikh shrine Damdama Sahib as the fifth seat of High Sikh authority is the height of absurdity. Bhai Kahan Singh also in his *Mahankosh*, the 'Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature', gives precisely these as the true meanings of the word "takht" as it occurs in Sikh writings. At Kiratpur, there is a historical Sikh shrine known as Takht Sahib but it has never been deemed or claimed as one of the High Seats of Sikh Authority.

Damdama Sahib, now in the Bhatinda District of Punjab is a holy and historical Sikh shrine of great historical

importance and sanctity, but it is not the fifth takht, in the meaning of a 'Sikh seat of authority,' and there is no human authority, now or ever, which can create new *takhts* valid and acceptable to the Sikh doctrine.

KAPUR SINGH'S REPLY TO BRAR'S REJOINDER

"I write this to attempt a reply to some of the points made by Mr. H.S. Brar in his letter about the Takhts in the May issue of *The Sikh Review* :

"I can refer to only some of the salient points so made by Mr. Brar, without presuming to be exhaustive.

1. Mr. Brar says that although I assert that the SGPC has violated the true Sikh doctrine, relating to the institution of the Sikh takhts yet I have given "no inkling" of such a Sikh doctrine. It seems obvious to me, after re-reading my original article that I have taken ample pains to explain what this true doctrine is, what its roots are, as embedded in certain metaphysical postulates about 'Space' which postulates are expressly accepted in the Guru Granth itself, in Hindu Numerology, on the basis of which the very first letter, the arithmetical numeral '1' is made the starting point of the basic ontological statement of Sikhism, the *mool mantra*, and the true connotation of the Persian term, *takht*. These are the three roots of the "true Sikh doctrine", out of which the Sikh institution of four takhts stems, while the first two metaphysical roots aforementioned explain why there are only four *rajtirths*, four *puris*, four *dhams* and four *maths* etc., in what Dr. Radhakrishnan aptly calls, the great Commonwealth of Hinduism.

Mr Brar's real grievance seems to be that if that is the "true Sikh doctrine" then it cannot be accepted by *nihaang* Sikhs of his puritan breed as anything having Hindu roots *ipso facto* derogatory to Sikhism.

To such a position it is not easy to reply but one may pose and, answer a simple question which lies at the root of Mr. Brar's mental agitation What is 'a true Sikh doctrine'?

should say it is one if (a) it is clearly laid down in the Sikh scripture or has been otherwise authoritatively proclaimed (b) It necessarily follows from what is accepted in the Sikh scripture or is implicit in some authorized and accepted Sikh institution and practice and is not essentially contrary to the proposition (a) above (c). It satisfactorily explains some Sikh institution or practice even being a doctrine of such Hindu or Islamic origin and acceptance as is known or can be shown to have been contemporaneous with the origin and growth of Sikhism and thus capable of having been validly absorbed by Sikhism. Any doctrine that answers to one or more of these three tests may safely and legitimately be accepted as a true Sikh doctrine. If there is any other, or fourth source of true Sikh doctrines, I confess I know it not. Now, the doctrine concerning the four takhts that I have enunciated fully answers to the, test (b), as well as to the test (c). This doctrine consists of three propositions : (1) a takht is a focus of the Sikh goal of the condominium of spiritual and earthly power and to this Mr Brar has taken no exception; (2) a takht refers to exercise of such condominium on an oecumenical scale that is, the Sikhism claims to be a World religion for all mankind and for all times. That Sikhism is an oecumenical religion, in this sense, is repeatedly proclaimed in the Guru Granth itself e.g. “ਬਲਿਓ ਚਰਾਗੁ ਅੰਧਾਰ ਮਹਿ ਸਭ ਕਲਿ ਉਧਰੀ ਇਕ ਨਾਮ ਧਰਮ” (3) That the Sikh takhts have a religious ancestry of four *rajtiraths*, *puris*, *dham*s and *maths* and holy *stupas*. I have fully explained in my article on the subject in the Sikh Review. That prior to the establishment of the four takhts, Sikh Gurus had taken due cognisance of this ancestry can be demonstrated by referring to the historical evolution and institutional organization of Sikhism. In 1496 A.D, Guru Nanak started establishing organized centres of Sikh religion, called, *manjees* and they were established as and when the situation permitted and required. In 1560 A.D. Guru Amar Dass introduced a meaningful pattern in the Sikh Church by establishing 22 dioceses of the religion. Bhai Santokh Singh tells that the 22

dioceses were intended to signify Sikh condominium of political and spiritual power in confrontation to the Imperial Mughal theocratic State: *dvivimasat dilli umraiv, iti Sikh marg bithaiv*, and in the *A Short History of the Sikhs*, Teja Singh and Ganda Singh support this view (page 23). In 1636 A.D. Guru Hargobind who established the Akal Takht, the first of the four Sikh takhts, imparted a clear and complete expression to the true doctrine of the Sikh takhts which is that Sikhism's territorial sway is to be universal and world wide, transcending the frontiers of the Mughal empire and that this universality is to be expressed by the number '4', this being the perfect number of Numerology not of Arithmetic, as Mr. Brar seems to think. In consultation with Baba Sri Chand the charismatic eldest son of Guru Nanak, Guru Hargobind, under the Supreme Pontiff, Baba Gurditta, the Guru's own son, established four (and not five) Ascesis-Fires, *dhunas*, presided over by the doyens of Sikh preachers, Altmot, Phul, Gonda and Balu Hasna. It is the Sikh preachers ordained by these Ascesis Fires who carried the torch of Sikhism, in years to come, to Bangladesh, Assam, Ceylon, Rameshvram, Kabul, Turkestan, Azerbaijan and up to the confines of Gobi desert in the U.S.S.R. as recent archaeological evidence has shown that the Upanisadic doctrine of Space being dependent creation of mind: *etasmad atma akasa sambhutam* (Taittareya) is the Sikh doctrine also is implicitly accepted in the Guru Granth: *traī gun mohia akas* (Asa. v.), Akasa is the playground of quality-modes of Existence'. That Space has four cardinal points that constitute its all-comprehensive coordinates is also a doctrine clearly reiterated in the Guru Granth: *chatar disa kinu balu apna*. This citation in the Guru Granth also establishes that, *balu*, the promulgation of power, in order to be all-pervasive must be four-directional.

The numerological significance of '4' as universality and perfection is referred to again and again in the Guru Granth. Finitude of time in relation to all forms of creation is referred to as 'duration of 4 days: *char divas ke pahune...* (Slok, Kabir).

char din apni naubat chale bajaee (Kedara, Kabir), and the immanent universal Law, *dharm*a that governs and sustains the entire universe is described as having 'four feet' or '4 supports: *pag kare dharam dhian jio* (Asa Chant. IV), and the complete and perfect enlightenment of God in human heart through successive four fluxes of a full time cycle is also alluded to as '4 lights': *chare dive chahu hath diye eka eka vari* (Basant.I).

Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha, in his *Mahankosh*, categorically states (p. 1386) that there are only four valid Sikh takhts.

In view of these considerations, it seems clear to me that the doctrine of four and only four takhts, is not only well grounded in the ancient spiritual tradition and metaphysical postulates of the culture and milieu out of which Sikhism has sprung but it also constitutes a true Sikh doctrine of impeccable purity.

(2) He indulges in a cheap joke at my assertion that according to Hindu Numerology '5' is a significator that reduces much diversity to meaningful measure and as such it applies to men and things and not to cardinal points of the Space. His joke is put in parenthesis pointing out that when I have said "meaningful" I have really meant "meaningless". Now, what I say about the numeral '5' is upheld not only in Hindu numerology, an ancient and well respected metaphysical Science, but also by Pythagoras who ruled over Greek Classical thought for over two thousand years. The Sikh Gurus themselves have in fact, based the Sikh doctrines of *pancha-pravan* and *panjpiaras* on this very concept, as careful students of Sikh theology and Comparative Religious studies well know. There is nothing to joke about in the proposition that while '4' is significator of the all pervasive Space, '5' signifies creatures and things within the Space. From times immemorial, quinary, decimal and duodecimal base have been regarded in almost all civilized societies, as number systems to impart a meaningful measure to men and things. If Mr. Brar or his friends find this as funny, the misfortune is not wholly mine but is that of the present Sikh academic levels also.

(3) Mr. Brar points out that four Sikh takhts cannot be *svayambhu* because it is well known that they came to be established only within the last three or four centuries, after the rise of Sikhism. Surely, Mr. Brar does not believe that my own ignorance is so colossal that I do not even know that Akal Takht was first built by Guru Hargobind in the 17th century and the remaining three takhts came to be built up and accepted in the early 18th century. *Svayambhu* is a Hindu metaphysical concept of much subtlety which means, "ever there", but not "everthere". In the world of Phenomenon *svayambhu*, "ever there" is in the 'unseen world', in the sphere of the Numenon, but which may manifest itself on the gross phenomenal plane at some period of time. *The sthapat* is to be distinguished from the *svayambhu* in this sense and not in the crude manner Mr Brar does. Nor are the philosophical notions of *svayaambhu* and 'unseen world' to be considered as a laughing matter, simply because they are rooted in and are traceable to ancient Hindu Metaphysics. In the Guru Granth itself the term, *svayambhu* is employed to refer to the Ultimate Reality in the opening lines of the Sikh scripture. God is designated as, 'saibhang', which is the *apbhramsa* form of *svayambhu*. As for the "unseen world", the Sikh scripture enjoins a constant and unbroken contemplation of the same, as efficacious discipline for achieving the *summum bonum*: *deh adrist rahio bismadi dukh binsai sukh ai jio*. It is in this sense that the takhts are to be deemed as *svayambhu*, and if Mr. Brar finds it difficult to grasp the notion then I can only reply in the words of Plato who in one of his Dialogues tells his pupil who is in a similar predicament as Mr. Brar, that the difficulty to the pupil is that "while you have senses, you have no mind."

(4) Mr. Brar gratuitously informs me that the reason why there is no enthusiasm for the demand for Sikh Homeland is that I, its chief expounder, am soaked in "Hindu ideology", while the Hindus themselves "have discarded such outdated and moth-eaten, so called Indian traditions." Although it may not be generally conceded that vastly subtle Hindus have

'discarded' their peculiar metaphysical insights as "outdated" and although 'metaphysics' 'philosophical postulates', "ideology" and "traditions" are concepts altogether different from one another and they do not have the same and even cognate meanings as Mr. Brar has presumed here. I am still thankful to him for having pointed out the real cause of my failure to evoke enthusiasm for a political objective which I believe as good for Sikh interests, for, *I have been under the impression that this absence of response was due to the traditional lack of political sense amongst the Sikhs to which some authorities in the past have referred as the asininity of the Sikh, the bovine mind of the Sikhs.* However, now that a pure Sikh ideologist of the status of Mr. Brar has upheld the idea of Sikh Homeland itself as praiseworthy, it is hoped that the Sikhs will respond to it.

(5) Mr. Brar says, that "it is a pity that a 'Sikh' and that too a Punjabi should regard himself as a member of Aryan 'race'. I do not deny that I am in need of all the pity that Mr. Brar can spare for being now in the position of having to argue basic points of Sikhism to an unsympathetic audience with whom sophisticated communication is not an easy matter. But Mr. Brar is mistaken if he thinks that I am not aware that Punjabis are not ethnically pure Aryans or that a Sikh is enjoined to re-orientate and develop his personality in accordance with the teachings of the Gurus. When I refer to 'the traditions and concepts of our Aryan race,' I refer to spiritual traditions and modalities of thought of our cultural heritage and ancestry. The term 'race' is well understood in such a context, and it is a great pity indeed, that it has been my lot to fall foul of Mr. Brar on this simple point also.

(6) What shall I say about Mr. Brar's contention that if the Sikh Gurus could make departures from Hinduism without being labelled as heretics, how can I call the SGPC men as great "heretics" for having corrupted the true doctrine that underlies the institution of the four takhts? Has one to

answer such criticism also, if one is in the unhappy position of having written on some obscure points of Sikh religion?

(7) Mr. Brar asserts that "monotheism, equality, fraternity, abolition of the caste system, prohibition of idol worship and other practices are all foreign to Hindu traditions. Because of this departure from Hindu traditions, a liberal adoption of Islamic principles Sikhism is a distinct and separate religion." That may be so or somebody might legitimately disagree but how has it any relevance whatever to the real points that I have tried to establish in my original thesis on the four takhts? If rules of logical relevancy are not binding on us, then all serious discussion is pointless amongst us.

(8) Mr. Brar says, "In Sikhism no number has any special significance. All the numerals are of equal importance". This is a brave statement to make apart from the consideration that "significance" and "importance" are not interchangeable synonyms. Does Mr. Brar think that the numeral '1' that is put as the first ideograph in the Sikh scripture has no "special significance"? Does he mean to convey that '2' is as "important" as '3', and '5' and '100' and '1000' in Sikhism? Mr Brar goes on to add, however, that "numeral, 5, because of its association with Punjab and in Sikhism, it has come to acquire a mystical and special significance therefore, fifth, takht is justified". So numeral, '5', has "come to acquire", an associational "significance" which cannot be a "mystical" significance nor such a 'significance' can have any ontological status, such as can govern fundamental institutional organization of the Sikh Church which the establishment of takhts is. Anybody who has some grounding in elements of philosophy, will readily appreciate this point, and nobody except, perhaps, amongst the present day Sikhs will care or dare to tread on a ground with the terrain of which he has not first familiarized himself. But amongst us the conviction seems to be almost universal that each and every Sikh has an equal right to pronounce on any subject under the sky and also that such a pronouncement is entitled to equal acceptance.

But, Mr. Editor I give up and concede that I am not really competent to discuss sophisticated issues on the level which Mr. Brar has adopted, and before concluding I respectfully call upon our intellectuals and specialists in Sikh religion, who occupy eminent positions in academic circles in relation to Sikh theology and philosophy, to participate in and raise the level of discussions of this nature so that the unequal contest between a layman like me and a veteran controversialist like Mr. Brar is transformed into a really fruitful contest.

AN ISLAMIC SACRED HEIRLOOM AT THE KESGARH TAKHT*

At the High Seat of Sikh Authority, Takht Kesgarh, Anandpur Sahib, there is preserved a sword of high quality steel with gold arabesque, and Arabic lettering on it and the keepers of the sacred heirlooms, at the Takht would tell you that this sword belongs to Hadrat Ali, the grandson of Prophet Mohammad. You would be further told that after many vicissitudes and change of hands this holy sword came into the Imperial Mughal treasury and when His Imperial Majesty Bahadur Shah I sat on the throne, he made a present of it to Guru Gobind Singh who was personally present at the coronation ceremony on July 23, 1707 A.D. at Agra, saying the following words :

"Holy Reverence, this is the most precious treasure in the possession of the Imperial Mughals. We have been keeping and guarding it so far. But its proper place is in the hands of an exalted holy person of your status so that it may remain as a memory of the holiest in the hands of the holiest."

It is for experts to decide about the date and style of manufacture of this weapon which, so it is believed, was sent by Guru Gobind Singh soon after the coronation of Emperor Bahadur Shah along with the messenger who brought the famous *Hukamnameh* issued on Oct. 2, 1707 A.D. to the congregation of Dhaul in which Guru Gobind Singh gives out his intention of returning to Punjab and has called upon the Khalsa to assemble at Anandpur Sahib.

* TSR-May. 1972.

This holy relic was first preserved by an *Udasi* ascetic, Gurbaksh Dass, from whom it was forcibly taken away by a Sodhi elder, a near kinsman of Guru Gobind Singh who made pretensions of being a successor of the Guru. This Sodhi was laid under a curse by the *Udasi* ascetic on account of this blasphemy, with the result that his whole line of succession ended round about 1715 A.D. The name of this accursed Sodhi is known but is an anathema to true Sikhs.

Ever since, this holy sword has remained at the Kesgarh Takht.

The sword, and the double edged *Khanda* are ancient Indian weapons as well as symbols in religious and metaphysical tradition. The double edged *Khanda* is a symbol of true and transcendental knowledge and in Buddhist iconography, the double-edged *Khanda* is invariably shown as held in the hands of *bodhisattava Manjusri* indicating that the *bodhisattava* is the imparter of true transcendental knowledge to mankind such as can dispel nescience, and also confer true light. The double-edged sword symbolizes this double potency of true transcendental knowledge : of destroying ignorance and of imparting true knowledge.

In the Mahayanist text, *Sudharampundrika*, the *bodhisattava Manjusri* is described as "bearing a double-edged sword that clean discriminating weapon" and the bronze *padmasan*, lotus seat, image of Manjusri sculptured in Java in the seventh century, preserved in the Berlin Museum and reproduced in Grunwedel's *Buddhist Art in India* (translated into English by Gibbon, 1901) is shown as carrying a double-edged sword in hand, almost identical with the *khanda* now preserved at Takht Kesgarh as the weapon with which *amrit* was first prepared by Guru Gobind Singh on March 30, 1699, at Anandpur Sahib.

Guru Gobind Singh in the *Dasamgranth*, while explaining the qualities, and character of a Khalsa, says that, a Khalsa, is one who possesses, the true knowledge which "brushes aside all dust and muck from out of the mind with the help

of the sword of true understanding", *gianeh ki badhani mono hoth le kotirta kutvar buhare*.

When in 1710, Banda Singh Bahadur proclaimed sovereignty of the Sikh people and the establishment of the Sikh State, he inscribed the following words on the State seal: *sikkeh zad bar har du alam tegh-i-nanak vahabast*, meaning that 'the Sikhs lay claim to the double sovereignty, temporal as well as spiritual and that this has been conferred, (*vahab*, conferer) by the central doctrine of the teachings of Guru Nanak, "*teghi nanak*." Those who literally translate the words, *teghi nanak*, as 'the Sword of Nanak' are not familiar with the well-established literary genre in the orient, of symbolical thinking. Europeans are unfamiliar with this mode of expression and most of us of the modern generations in the East have also become ignorant of this ancient oriental literary tradition of symbolical thinking. *Tegh* that is, the sword, means, 'the central and operative doctrine' and it is not to be rendered as 'a weapon of steel', as many of us mistakenly do.

This is how the significance of the curved swords and the double edged swords and other weapons which are reverently preserved at the holy Sikh Takhts and many other Sikh sacred places is to be understood. These weapons are not to be deemed as merely physical objects of historical value and sanctity but as reified ideograms of symbolical thought, essentially the words expressive of true knowledge, just as the written corpus of the Guru Granth embodies true knowledge in ideological propositions. The reverence and religious care shown in respect of these weapons is thus to be properly understood and it is not to be interpreted as weaponolatry.

The presence of this holy sword of Semitic line of prophets at the Kesgarh Takht is also to be understood in this manner and it is not to be understood as merely a physical relic of historical importance. The real significance is that Sikhism is a true heir to the true basic meanings and moods of Islam, particularly as they are embodied in the life and teachings of the interiorized religion and compassionate heart

of Hadrat Ali. Islamic history tells us that in the battle of Badar (624 A.D) Prophet Mohammed attacked the caravan of Abu Sufian and in this battle Abu Sufian as well as the other great adversary of Mohammed, Abu Jahil were killed. As a booty a number of swords were captured, among them a strange double-edged sword, *khanda*, which came to be known as, *dhul-faqar* or the 'cleaver of vertabrae'. Mohammed took a strong fancy to this sword and he kept it to himself and during all his subsequent battles carried it with him believing it to be a demonstrable divine sign of inevitable victory. This sword, the 'Cleaver' that literally means, *khanda*, *faqar*, was then inherited by Hadrat Ali after the demise of Mohammed, and it is known that more than one copies were made of this sword and on each were engraved words to some such effect, as a rule, "No sword can match the Cleaver and no young Knight can match with Ali."

Subsequently this sword became a holy relic passing into the hands, of Abbasid Caliphs who regarded, their possession of the sword, and the mantle of the Apostle as proof of their legitimacy.

When Baghdad was destroyed in 1258 A.D by the Mongols, this sword vanished and there is no sign of it amongst the holy relics inherited by the Osmanli Turks.

It is not clear how this sword at the holy Kesgarh Takht came into the hands of the Imperial Mughals at Delhi, though it is by no means unlikely that it may have travelled thus far.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BHAJ SAHIB RANDHIR SINGH*

Dr. Trilochan Singh, the Sikh scholar and intellectual, has rendered great service to the history of 'Freedom Struggle in India,' as well as to Sikhism by rendering the Punjabi Autobiography of Bhai Randhir Singh, Sikh mystic saint and patriot, in English, and thus making it available to wider circles. His translation is both faithful and idiomatic with the result that the reader hardly suspects that it is not an original writing. This Autobiography affords two keen insights into matters which have been deliberately obfuscated and kept obscure by those who have the power of politics and propaganda in their control in India. The Autobiography reveals, for the first time to the larger non-Sikh public the true doctrinal position of Sikhism in relation to the great passions of the modern man, nationalism and patriotism. As Bhai Randhir Singh explains in this book, and as he exemplified in his life of long sufferings and great tribulations, to a Sikh patriotism, and nationalism are legitimate and genuine demands on a citizen but only as subsidiary adjuncts to the pursuit of the Final End of Man on this earth, which is refinement of consciousness, widening horizons of knowledge and awareness and progressive achievement of nearness to God. Neither patriotism, nor nationalism can be legitimate ends in themselves for a true, cultured and sensitive man and they certainly cannot be employed merely as stepping stones to personal glory, fame or power. They must be subjugated

* Reviewed by Sirdar Kapur Singh, TSR-Sept-72.

to the higher spiritual life of self-realization or else their pursuit becomes evil and poisonous. This is the one great insight which Bhai Randhir Singh reveals into this basic question that occupies and sometimes puzzles the mind of modern man.

In his conversation with young Bhagat Singh in the Central Jail Lahore, Bhai Randhir Singh explains this point succinctly :

Another insight revealed by this remarkable Autobiography is in regard to the true nature of the political psyche of the peoples who inhabit this country and now constitute the Indian Nation, under the constitution Act of India 1950. The confessions made by youthful and reckless Bhagat Singh to Bhai Randhir Singh in the Central Jail Lahore, a few days before Bhagat Singh was hanged for a crime which, he confesses, he never committed, but which he admitted having committed are of a startling nature to those "who are not so well aware of the undercurrents that run strong and deep in the ocean of humanity, that is India. Without properly understanding and appreciating these undercurrents neither the emergence of Pakistan nor the true nature of the political activity and scene in India and other countries of this sub-continent can be properly appreciated.

Bhagat Singh who has been acclaimed as a great, peerless martyr by the modern Hindu nationalists, freely confesses that he was under an external necessity to disassociate himself formally from the Sikh people and Sikhism, so that his own patriotic activities could be taken note of and recognized by the Hindus. He minces no words in saying that unless he parted with his distinctive Sikh symbols of uncut hair, the Hindu nationalism could neither recognize nor honour him, and that any Sikh, as long as he remains a Sikh also has no chance of being accepted or recognized as a true patriot or a nationalist in India that was, and Bharat that is, no matter how pure, lofty his idealism and how great his sacrifices. In a word, the edifice of the Indian Nation, as conceived by the Hindu

psyche, has to be and is being raised on the bones and ashes of the Sikh people and the Khalsa. No Indian Nation and no concept of 'nationalism' is truly acceptable to those who now control the destinies of India unless it is completely and finally alienated from the distinctive religion and historical traditions of the Sikh people. The tribulations of the Sikhs in free India since 1947, the political chaos and disintegration in the political life of Punjab being systematically fostered by the rulers of Delhi, cannot be otherwise truly appreciated except through these insights that are revealed in this Autobiography.

There is yet a third insight into the psyche of the Sikh people themselves, which this Autobiography affords and without which many aspects of political behaviour patterns of the Sikhs remain puzzling. In the excellent and well documented Introduction added to the English rendering of this Autobiography by the learned translator are revealed ice-berg personalities and doings of certain individuals who, because of the innate naivette and also psychotic perversity of such Sikhs, have apparently succeeded in gaining both the worlds - the approbation of the Sikhs as the true guardians of the Sikh interests and the rich rewards that traitors to the causes of their own people have tried to reap throughout the ages.

The story of the accursed Sardar Bahadur Gajjan Singh, the traducer and unrelenting tormentor of the saint Randhir Singh has been vividly brought out by the translator, without however, stating that it was the real nephew of this Gajjan Singh whom the Sikhs, through the instrumentality of their mendicant political leaders, the Sant Brothers, picked up as the first Chief Minister of the first Akali government in the Punjab. Similarly, the translator has ripped the cover off the face of him whom the Sikhs have, for the last half a century, honoured as their only authoritative theologian and who was picked up as the first Vice Chancellor of the first University established in the Homeland of the Sikhs to advance their cultural interests.

Bhai Randhir Singh, a great patriot, a man of the highest ideals of impeccable purity, a person of self-realization, and a remarkable man of living religious faith, an intellectual of a high order and a peerless mystic of the Sikh tradition belongs to the galaxy of truly great men that India has thrown up during the last 100 years while in British bondage. There are not more than half a dozen such comprehensive great souls that India has thus produced during this period, and Bhai Randhir Singh is inferior to no one of these. Only the incomparable, Ramakrishna, the Paramhansa, can be legitimately named as his true kinsman in the matter of modern phenomenon of theophony.

Dr. Trilochan Singh has earned much spiritual merit by making this English translation of Bhai Randhir Singh's original Punjabi Autobiography, and he deserves the gratitude of all good men who value truth and justice above everything else.

VULGARIZATION OF SIKH DOCTRINES AND RITUALS*

When the Punjab Gurdwara Act was placed on the statute-book in 1925, the main objective was to clean the Sikh gurdwaras from managerial control of those whose commitment to Sikhism had become obviously doubtful. The other motivation which inspired these arrangements has been claimed to be the determination to keep Sikh holy shrines free from interference by the State on the ground that the State was no longer the Sarkar Khalsa and, therefore, it was likely to exercise its influence in a prejudicial manner to the true interests of the Khalsa.

Those who have watched this experiment, during the last almost half a century, have no illusions left either that the objective and the impulse have remained inviolate or that the method of controlling historical Sikh shrines and endowments through the democratic procedure of one man one vote has led to happy results .

To begin with, it was a most unprecedented and ill-conceived proposal to place these Sikh shrines in the hands of a democratically elected committee. Throughout the history of Religions of the world, there is not a single case on record where such an ill-advised and stupid procedure has been accepted, even as a trial measure, for managing and controlling fundamental centres of religion. In Catholic Christianity, the entire direction of the interpretation of doctrines and exposition of theology as well as the ritual and ceremonial management

* TSR-April 1972.

of centres of religion has been in the hands of a class of specialists, specially ordained, exclusively trained and wholly dedicated to the cause of religion. The result is that the religion of Christianity has prospered as well as stood the ups and downs of history during the last two thousand years without being seriously damaged or corrupted. True, the Protestant Christianity accepts managerial control of their churches on a national and state basis, but in this case, the State has itself assumed directly the responsibility of defending and propagating the true doctrines of religion. Even here the question of doctrines and theology are never permitted to be affected or corrupted by the vulgar vote of the laity.

In Islam, although there is no ordained class of the clergy as is the case in Sikhism also, but through tradition and firm spontaneous consensus, *ijma* of Muslim jurisprudence, the matters of doctrine and theology and ritual and ceremonial have always remained as the exclusive preserve of the highly trained and dedicated *ulema* and neither the Muslim laity nor the political power, even in an Islamic State, has ever presumed to interfere or dictate in these matters.

In Buddhism, whether of Hinayan or Mahayamvariety, the vital questions of religion, namely, the doctrine, the theology, the ritual and the ceremonial have always remained exclusively in the hands of synods of *bhikshus*, a class highly trained, wholly dedicated and voluntarily alienated from all secular matters and considerations.

In Hinduism, though it does not claim to be an organised religion, it has always been agreed and conceded that only those may speak and decide in respect of the vital questions affecting religion, who are wholly immersed in the primal sources of Hindu religion and whose life-long training qualifies them to speak on the subject with authority.

In *Manavadharmasastra* (II.6), it is clearly laid down, that apart from the *Veda* and the *Smriti*, only those who thoroughly understand these two and follow their precepts in their daily conduct and have also developed a trained conscience of such

as have acquired inner realisation of the truths of Hinduism, *sadhunamatman stushtil* are qualified and permitted to interpret and control the matters of religion.

But there is no Sikh tradition or doctrine which lends support to the notion that Sikhism is a sphere into which every person has the birth-right to meddle and over which every hoodlum or ignoramus has rights of control and direction.

Since, in our mass-wisdom, we decided, about half a century ago, that the Sikh historical shrines with large endowments should pass into the hands of persons elected on the basis of adult suffrage, we have paid the price which all those who disregard dictates of reason, historical experience and common sense have to pay. The Sikh gurdwaras have become cesspools of vulgarity and corruption and the low level to which the practice of Sikhism in these centres of religion has been reduced is a matter over which every sensitive Sikh sheds tears of blood.

We may leave aside the manner in which the offerings and funds of these gurdwaras are utilized because what is here happening is just that which was to be expected in the circumstances we have ourselves generated. But it is the practices, the doctrines and the rituals of the religion that have been corrupted, vulgarized and degraded in a manner which leaves little hope for a return to regeneration and renaissance of religion unless the Guru helps us do it through some miracle, that causes the gravest possible concern.

The Punjab Gurdwara Act does not contemplate at all that those placed in control and management of the historical Sikh shrines and their endowments, through an adult suffrage, are competent or permitted to pronounce upon Sikh doctrines, Sikh theology, Sikh rituals, and the foundations of the organisation of the Sikh Church. Yet only recently the gentlemen of the Gurdwara Committee at Amritsar have pronounced, through the performance of unanimous voting, that henceforward there should be deemed five High Seats of

Sikh Authority instead of the four traditional Takhts and now even in the congregational prayers made in the gurdwaras under the control of the SGPC five Takhts are mentioned instead of the traditional four. We may leave aside as to whether there are or can be only four *Takhts* or their number can be multiplied into five or fifteen or twenty. This involves highly metaphysical and subtle considerations which even the experts can appreciate with much difficulty. The first question is, 'who is competent to pronounce on the matter with authority and finality?' Surely, the SGPC is not authorised to do so under the powers conferred upon it by the Punjab Sikh Gurdwaras Act, and nor do they possess the requisite qualifications to do so and yet they have had the impudence of doing so and no Sikh has effectively protested against it.

For many years past, at the Golden Temple Amritsar and other holy places under the control of this popularly elected Management Committee, the votaries are not allowed to offer *karahprasad* except that purchased from the monopoly-shops of this Committee where one half of the price of the *karahprasad* offered, is deducted at source by these commercial minded gentlemen, on cash. Thus a votary is not allowed to appear before his Guru with the amount of sacramental food which he intended to offer though the whole essence of this ritual offering is the initially formed intention, *sukkhia hoia, samkalaa* which is thus corrupted and frustated, *bhrast*. Leaving aside this doctrinal propriety of whether *karahprasad* of only one half value of that actually intended is permissible, the question to be answered is under what authority the SGPC and their minions are degrading and corrupting this central ritual of Sikh religion.

From the times of Guru Nanak onwards, the *karahprasad* as a sacramental offering, has always been prepared of three equal parts of the ingredients—white sugar, ghee and fine wheat flour. It has been the traditional practice based on distinct and profound religious ideas to offer the *karah* made with brown sugar as one of its ingredients to and in the *Sakti*

temples of Devi. In the Jawalamukhi temple in Kangra hills, the practice can be seen as still in vogue. In the pre-Vedic *serpent-worship-nag puja*, a concoction made of jaggery and oil and rice flour was used and is still used. In the Sikh practice of the offering of sacramental food, the white sugar and ghee were deliberately and for most significant philosophical and esoteric reasons introduced and established. In the Guru Granth itself, there is a clear reference to the Sikh sacramental food to be prepared of three ingredients—the white sugar, the ghee and the fine wheat flour; *nit rasoi teria ghio maida kham*. In any case in the fundamental principles of the Science of Life, ayurveda, of our Aryan ancestors, the oil has been held as psychically unfit for human consumption : *ghrityem satgam tailcam, mardone na tu bhakshane*, that is, oil is a hundred times more beneficial than ghee provided it is employed for massaging but not for consumption.

Now, however, the wilful custodians at Amritsar have issued an ordinance that 'henceforth the *karahprasad* at Harimandar Sahib and at the Takhts under their control is to be prepared with hydrogenated oils and not with butter fat, and thus the Sikh sacramental food has been degraded to the status of *nagpuja*. Under what authority and what religious reason has this open sacrilege of Sikh rituals been introduced?

There is nobody, not many, who understand the implications of these gross acts of perversion and degradation of Sikh doctrines and rituals which are daily being committed by those into whose hands we have foolishly entrusted the management and control of our gurdwaras. There are not many who have the time or the courage to protest against what is being done. There are not many who, when apprised of this situation, are prepared to shake off their lethargy and act in defence of the purity of Sikh doctrines and rituals.

What the Guru has in store for the Sikhs and Sikhism, He alone knows.

ANANDPUR SAHIB RESOLUTION*

Whereas the Sikhs of India are a historically recognised political nation ever since the inauguration of the order of the Khalsa in the concluding years of the 17th century, and

Whereas, this status of the Sikh Nation has been internationally recognised and accepted by the major powers of Europe and Asia to wit, France, England, Italy, Russia, China, Tibet, Persia (now Iran), Afghanistan, Nepal and the Company Bahadur, Fort William, Calcutta, till the middle of the 19th century, and again, by the outgoing British and the Hindu Congress and the Muslim League of India in the middle of the 20th century, and

Whereas, the brute majority in India, in 1950, have imposed a constitutional arrangement in India which denudes the Sikhs of their political and cultural particularity, thus liquidating the Sikhs politically and exposing them to a spiritual death and cultural decay leading invariably to their submergence and dissolution into the saltish sea-waters of inchoate Hinduism, and

Whereas, the Sikhs have been thus shackled and enslaved in unethical and cynical repudiation of solemn and binding commitments and public promises earlier made to the Sikhs, while the Sikh representatives in the Indian Constituent Assembly, in 1950 refused to become a consenting party to those crooked arrangements, and declined to affix their signatures to the official copy of the Constituent Act, thus promulgated, the Shiromani Akali Dal in the name and on behalf of the Sikhs.

* Adopted on Oct. 16-17, 1973 at Anandpur.

Proclaims that the Sikhs are determined, by all legitimate means, to extricate and free themselves from this degrading and death-dealing situation so as to ensure firmly their honourable survival and salvage their inherent dignity in India, and their birth-right to influence meaningfully the mainstream of world-history. The Sikhs, therefore,

Demand firstly, that an autonomous region in the north of India should be set up forthwith wherein the Sikh interests are constitutionally recognised as of primary and special importance to the fundamental state policy.

Secondly, that this autonomous region should include the present Punjab, Karnal and Ambala Districts of Haryana, inclusive of Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Pinjore, Kalka, Dalhousie, Nalagarh District, Sirsa, Guhla and Rattia areas and Ganganagar District of Rajasthan, thus bringing main contiguous Sikh population and traditional Sikh habitats within this autonomous Sikh region, as an intergral part of the Union of India, and

Thirdly, this Sikh autonomous region may be declared as entitled to frame its own internal constitution on the basis of having all powers to and for itself except, Foreign Affairs, Defence, Currency and General Communications to remain as subjects within jurisdiction of the Federal Indian Government.

May the Rider of the Blue Horse Help Us.

MITR PIARA — AN UNDESERVED AWARD*

It is most gratifying to his friends and admirers that Professor Sant Singh Sekhon's Punjabi drama, *Mitr Piara*, on Lenin has brought him the high distinction of a Sahitya Akademy award after its rejection by the same authority last year.

Earlier the Soviet opposite number of our Akademy, for the recognition of which the drama was originally written had also rejected the book and we may, therefore, legitimately presume that apart from its undoubted dramaturgical merits, this book has some extra-literary nuances also which have brought it formal recognition in a somewhat circuitous manner.

The name of the play, *Mitr Piara*, 'My Friend' and 'My Beloved' are the opening words of a quatrain by Guru Gobind Singh composed and sung at one of the Guru's most poignant passionate moments in the hemistich: 'Let someone tell God, my friend and Beloved, of the terrible pangs of separation that His humble slave suffers'. The God as *mitr piara*, in this composite Punjabi phraseology, has been addressed for the first time in the history of religions of the world, by Guru Gobind Singh

* ਮਿਤ੍ਰ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਲੁ ਮੁਰੀਦਾਂ ਦਾ ਕਹਣਾ ॥

ਤੁਹੁ ਬਿਨੁ ਰੋਗੁ ਰਜਾਈਆਂ ਦਾ ਓਢਣ ਨਾਗ ਨਿਵਾਸਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਹਣਾ ॥

ਨੂਤ ਸੁਰਾਹੀ ਖੰਜਰੁ ਪਿਯਾਲਾ ਬਿੰਗ ਕਸਾਈਯਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਹਣਾ ॥

ਕਾਰਤੇ ਦਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਸੱਥਰੁ ਚੰਗਾ ਭੱਠ ਖੇੜਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਰਹਣਾ ॥

(ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ)

Letter dated 18th Feb 1973 from S. Kapur Singh (Ex-M.P.) to the Editor,
The Tribune, Chandigarh, Published in TSR-May 1973.

just as the God has been described in the Koran, for the first time by Prophet Mohammed, as *ar-Rahiman-ar-Rahim*.

It is obvious that the skilful 'progressive' writer, Sekhon, here unmistakably insinuates through the device of peripheral suggestiveness that (1) The God worshipped by Guru Gobind Singh is dead, is no more, though. He might have existed in the 17th Century. (2) The Omnipotent and omni-competent God of the 20th century and the centuries to come is Lenin, to whom alone now allegiance and worship is due by all mankind but, in particular, by the Sikhs.

In the Jaina Seven-limbed Logic (*saptbhanginyaya*), it is permissible to assert of an object that it both is and is not at different moments (*syad asti-nasti*) and accordingly Prof. Sekhon is here on firm logical ground in suggesting what he does, but whether his taste is equally impeccable might be tested by him by altering the title of his drama to *ar-Rahman-ar-Rahim* not forgetting the likely traditional responses of Jamshaid Khan the Pathan who stabbed Guru Gobind Singh and that of the more recent Ilam Din, the assassin of Swami Shradhanand.

Even if Prof. Sekhon and the Academy are persuaded that the Sikhs are political and cultural orphans today, they must never forget that it may not always be so as the *saptbhanginyaya* hints."

Letter dated 25th February, 73 from S. Kapur Singh to Shri R. Madhavan Nair, Editor, The Tribune, Chandigarh.

"Dear Sir,

1. I write this in connection with my letter dated, the 18th February, 1973 on the subject of Professor Sant Singh Sekhon's book, called, *Mitr Piara* which has recently been awarded an Akademy Prize, an event which you highlighted in your Paper by publishing a special photograph of this award-giving ceremony, to Professor Sekhon.
2. Yesterday, you informed me on the telephone as your 'final decision' to consign this letter to the Waste Paper Basket.

3. In this letter, I had made out the following points that:
(1) This Punjabi book was originally written and presented for award to the Soviet Academy for the highest literary prize and the Soviet Academy rejected it. (2) The book was then presented to the Indian Sahitya Academy last year and it was rejected. (3) This year the Indian Sahitya Academy has adjudged the book as one meriting the Academy award. From these undisputed facts, I had argued that (a) This award has been given in a circuitous manner. (b) The name of the book refers to the special name given to God Almighty by Guru Gobind Singh, that has now become specially enshrined in the Sikh religious consciousness. (c) Thereby the author has tried to insinuate through the device of peripheral suggestiveness that the unseen God whom Guru Gobind Singh worshipped is dead and that His place has been taken by Lenin to whom the allegiance and worship of mankind, particularly that of the Sikhs, is now due.
4. On this basis I had protested that Professor Sekhon had extremely bad taste in so naming the book and that, possibly, this was the reason why the Soviet Akademy rejected the book and subsequently might have palmed it off on the Indian Sahitya Akademy presuming that the latter is in a better position to play with the religious susceptibilities of the Sikhs without incurring any serious consequences.
5. You must be aware that blatant injuries to religious susceptibilities, even of the Sikhs, is a serious crime according to the laws of our country, and thus by making a point of it, I was, by no means, playing the role of an incurable or irresponsible fanatic. You have told me on the telephone that you refuse to publish this letter on the ground that it refers to religion and that it casts aspersions on the conduct of the Sahitya Akademy. You added with obvious acerbity that your decision was 'final'.

6. I write this to assert that though it is within your powers to reject publication of a letter, for, these powers are well-known and are publicly backed by the Trustees of *The Tribune*, but that is not to say that, in so doing, you are acting in accordance with journalistic ethics. That my letter on substantially the same lines and on the identical subject has been promptly published in the *Times of India*, Bombay and Delhi which paper, in status, influence and journalistic standards does not compare unfavourably with your provincial paper, underlines the point I am making.
7. On earlier occasions also you have thus rejected publication of my communications made in all seriousness and on topics which agitate and concern a large section of your readers. One such case relates to a certain letter I wrote about the democratic implications of 1971 Parliamentary Elections with particular reference to the position of the Akali Dal candidates as it emerged through the votes actually cast, although Delhi English Dailies saw nothing objectionable in my letters to them on similar lines.
8. It is obvious there from that your policy is to refuse your columns for ventilation of any such Sikh ideas and impulses as might be represented in a manner favourable to their peculiar interests, whether in politics or culture. You might also, in addition, have placed my own name on the Index, which is not of much consequence, for, were I really keen to see my name printed in your columns, I could easily get it done, I know, by writing either on trivia or in praise of your editorials. In any case your policy of so discriminating against the Sikhs and Sikhism is neither in accordance with the Will and Testament of the founder of *The Tribune* Trust, nor otherwise in accordance with the highest journalistic norms, though it might be said in extenuation that you are not the originator of such a policy, it being of a long

standing duration. *The Tribune*, no matter who usurps it or for how long, shall remain, legally and morally, a designated spokesman of the Punjabi people; which include the Sikhs, and no amount of arbitrary exercise of your editorial powers or rude assertion thereof can change this situation.

9. It is debatable whether absolute power corrupts absolutely. That corruption of values and norms debases every body is not debatable.
10. I, therefore, close this communication with the remark that when I write to you I do not do so for the sake of seeing my name in the print but only when I am genuinely actuated by public interests in which I include the Sikh interests and for that I do not deserve either snubs or an attitude of acerbity from anyone, no matter how final and absolute the powers which he enjoys.

With kind regards.

Sd/- Kapur Singh

SIKH SYMBOLS AND THE SIKHS IN CANADA*

Sardar Pushpinder Singh has written a very interesting and informative article on the Sikhs in Canada in the February issue of *The Sikh Review*.

He informs us that the younger generation of Sikhs in Canada defines Sikhism in a slightly different way than it is defined in the native Punjab. He goes on to tell us that, then in Canada, "a Sikh, especially the young one, considers that so long as he expresses his faith in the teachings of Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh and considers *Guru Granth Sahib* as the holy scripture of Sikh Religion, he is Sikh". He goes on, "the hint is clear, he is not prepared to precept the traditional physical outlook (*sic*) of a Sikh which was made compulsory by Guru Gobind Singh by imposing on the Sikhs the five *Ks*. He advocates the essence of Sikhism in the script and soul and not in the physical requirements."

The writer concludes the point by informing us that the young Sikh in Canada "pleads that the need of time is different and that to fit in the Canadian pattern of life, we will have to look like others."

Mr. Singh offers an apology for all this by adding that "though the faith from tradition is shaken, faith in Sikhism stays."

While it is possible to understand and even appreciate the attitudes of the younger generation of the Sikhs in Canada and elsewhere, it is not easy to accept it either as logical or

* TSR April, 1973.

as otherwise capable of defence from the point of view of the Sikh doctrines and the historical role the Sikhs are required to play according to the vision of the Gurus.

The psychological need to look like others who are in a majority and also in a position to impose their approval-judgements on a strange minority amidst them, is all too obvious: The writer of these lines, while a student at Cambridge in Great Britain during the forties of this century, was personally made aware of this social stress for a number of years. But the more he has thought over this question, the more he is convinced that those who surrender to the foreign social ethos of non-Sikh societies neither display any exemplary integrity or strength of character, nor much proficiency in logical thinking and nor even profound wisdom. Conformism is the easiest response to antagonism and stresses of a social and emotional character such as the presence of a strange minority in foreign social surroundings generates. Conformism releases an individual from the terrible tension of being different from others all the time, in a foreign social atmosphere, but when this has been said, all has been said in favour of the attitudes of the young Sikhs in Canada and elsewhere.

Firstly, it is not easy to sympathize with a point of view which arrogates to itself the authority to define Sikhism, "in a slightly different way", from how it has been defined by the founders of Sikhism and the collective national consensus of the historical Sikh Community. This arrogation is escapist cowardice, if words are not to be minced. It would perhaps be less presumptuous and more honest to adopt and declare an attitude of a personal incapacity to act upon and sustain the true definition of religious requirements than to assume the competence to 'redefine' what ought to be the true Sikhism. Heresy, apostasy and defection from a religion are more honest names for the attitude that underlies the claim to 'redefine' a religion. Those who shirk from calling a spade a spade and do not admit this truth to themselves merely push

their personalities into emotional conflicts and complexities which do more damage to themselves than the gains they seek to achieve by the circuitous path they thus follow. Is it more profitable for the point of view of an individual himself to be utterly honest with oneself and admit what he really intends and does? Or is it a cleverer or wiser path to conceal the true contours of one's own hidden urges and temporary emotional problems such as arise in the case of Sikhs when they try to use one word—*transplant themselves*—in a social milieu altogether strange from, if not hostile to the fundamental insights into Reality, represented by the religious way of life of their ancestors? Any psychiatrist or a psychoanalyst practitioner will not hesitate as to which advice to give under the circumstances. By arguing falsely that while they are actually defecting from Sikhism they are merely 're-defining' it is to create greater problems than those which are sought to be solved. This is one important aspect of the problem to be seriously considered by the younger generation of the Sikhs in Canada.

The second point, which is no less important for them, is that in Sikhism, unlike many older religions such as Islam, Mahayan Buddhism, and certain varieties of Christianity, mere verbal assent to a faith is of no avail. The young Sikh in Canada seems to think that he has the capacity and authority to separate the essence of Sikhism from the formally non-essential and that thereby he achieves access to the kernel of religion and discards the husks. What that 'essence' and 'kernel' is, he alone presumes to be the final judge of it. It was maintained in the past in the older religions, that if a votary of religion just makes a true and unreserved assent to a certain verbal formula, which was supposed to encase the 'truth' of that religion, the devotee was automatically saved thereby. From Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh, constant and repeated stress was laid on the divergence of religious statements of Sikhism on the point, namely, that the essence of religion is not the dogma or the formula, for, what people think is

relatively secondary, what matters is the true substance of the dogma and the formula which is expressed in the acts of men and not in the mere words or utterances of men. This incidentally, is the new movement of humanism where Catholics; Protestants, and Marxists move in common disregarding different formula and ideologies that separate them. This central truth of Sikhism is enshrined in the revelation of Guru Nanak himself. "ਗਲੀ ਭਿਸਤਿ ਨ ਜਾਈਐ ਛੁਟੈ ਸਚੁ ਕਮਾਇ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 141) "the goal can be achieved only through the deed and not the word".

It is obvious, therefore, that the very claim which the young Sikhs of Canada thus make of redefining Sikhism for themselves is not only highly presumptuous, but it also constitutes a defiance of the starting point of Sikhism. Thereby, these young Sikhs do not accept or practise Sikhism but repudiate and defect from it. It is necessary for the young Sikhs to be clear in their minds on this second point also.

The last point to bear in mind is as to what culture, which includes the practice of religion, consists in. In the UNESCO sponsored book, *Traditional Cultures in South East Asia*, the following definition of culture is given :

"Culture means the total accumulation of all material objects, ideas and symbols, beliefs, sentiments, values and forms which are passed from one generation to another in any given society."

The belief, therefore, of the young Sikhs of Canada that they can diverge from the culture of the older Sikh generations nurtured in Punjab and yet can remain whole Sikhs is shown to be altogether fantastic when this definition of culture is kept in view. What the young Sikhs of Canada are doing is not a continuation of the culture of their ancestors but a hiatus and a break from that culture and let there be no mistake about it. No matter how unpleasant and unpalatable this truth sound to be rebellious young mind planted in the current chaotic moral and spiritual atmosphere of the western societies, it is the truth.

The *keshas*, the turban, the iron bangle and all these details which keep the Sikhs and the Sikh life separate from the majority of mankind surrounding them are of the utmost spiritual importance when they are properly considered. They are the fence surrounding their daily life, they are not their life itself. They make it possible for Sikhism to survive but they are not the reasons for that survival.

The Sikhs from Punjab, who during the unsettled history of the community during the 18th and 19th centuries settled in U.P. and Mysore and other parts of India, were completely submerged in the surrounding sea of Hindus by the end of the 19th century, as soon as they gave up their peculiar Sikh symbols and outward terms. They even forgot their origins as Sikhs and it is only now, during the last 20 or 30 years that evidence has been dug up and discovered from the past memories and other bits of evidence concerning these communities that they are originally Sikhs from Punjab. The sturdy Sikhs from the Punjab who settled in the early 20th century in South Africa, Argentina and Brazil and Mexico have been almost completely submerged into the majority Catholic Christian Community by the middle of the 20th century, once they abandoned their peculiar religious symbols.

It requires no prophetic insight to know the fate of these young Sikhs in Canada once they abandon the peculiar symbols of Sikhism ordained by the Guru himself to whom they profess their total allegiance in this world and the next. This fate shall be no different from the fate of those who turn their backs on the Sun in whose light they hope to walk and move about.

True, Sikhs remain Sikhs in spite of every pressure and temptation because it is basically good and satisfying to be a Sikh and not because they are forbidden to shingle and shave or to smoke the deadly nicotine poison. And it is basically good and satisfying to remain a Sikh because of the deep spirituality and the profound faith in the Word of the Guru.

and not merely because of observance of certain forms or verbal assent to certain formulae. But this neither detracts from the vital relevance of these forms and formulae to the all important question of ultimate survival, nor authorizes any one to deviate from or 'redefine' Sikhism as originally revealed by the Gurus. Such a stance is simply impermissible as well as unwise.

When at the location of present-day Mukatsar the Sikh elders of *Majha*, in 1706 AD, presumed to request Guru Gobind Singh to reshape his postures towards the political power by 'redefining' Sikhism, the response of the Guru was sharp and to the point, *Sikh hovat lebe updesu, devat ho bipreet visesu*, "a true Sikh hears and obeys but you are cursed and contrary and presume to advise and guide the Guru."

The present age calls not for prohibitions, it is true, but for *positive* contribution of religion though conditions necessary for preserving the ethos and the milieu out of which that contribution is most likely to come, must also be preserved and sustained with utmost care and devotion. One cannot live without the other and this is the arcane meaning of the part of our congregational prayer in which we ask from the Unseen Power that "each Sikh may be given the strength to remain steadfast in his faith in Sikhism up to his last breath on this earth with his sacred hair and symbols unmolested."

The great *samkaracharya* taught the fundamental classification of human activity and goals into two categories the *preya* and the *shreya*. The *preya* thoughts and actions are those which give assessment to immediate stresses and problems and lead to passing pleasures of life. The *shreya* attitudes in life are those that ultimately lead to enduring and spiritual achievements. The claim of religion is to teach men to sift the *preya* from the *shreya*. The path which the young generation of Sikhs propose to tread in Canada and elsewhere is the road to the *preya* mode of life. The path which Sikhism claims to show men is the *shreya* mode of life. When one is

young and feels the pulsations of bewitching spring sensations and pleasures as the only real thing in life, one is irresistibly drawn to the *preya*. But when the hectic pulls of sensations and passing pleasures weaken and are slackened and the mind matures and gains strength for appreciating and pursuing enduring values of life then it is the *shreya* path which appeals to properly cultured human mind. Presently throughout the modern western societies in which are to be included the Communist forms of societies, there evidently is this uncontrolled yearning for the *preya* to the exclusion of the *shreya*. The mankind must turn its face to the Sun of religion as refuge from the uncertainties and frustrations of the modern western way of life.

Sikhism and its formal life represent the Light to which mankind is "destined to return sooner or later and it seems sooner than later. Has not the Guru prophesied this in the Sikh scripture itself that the eternal Truth of religion cannot be finally abandoned by man *ih vastu taji na jae* ? "ਏਹ ਵਸਤੁ ਤਜੀ ਨਹ ਜਾਈ ?"

SIKHISM : A WAY OF LIFE*

Since religion postulates that the order of reality, which it regards as the Ultimate Reality, is non-verbal in nature, it cannot be comprehended by verbal experience; verbal experience and its organising tool, the reason, are sometimes regarded as irrelevant to a life of religion, if not also inimical. Sikhism repudiates this error. It concurs in declaring that the truth of religion is plucked from a realm above the temporal flux and that it is a non-verbal experience, *akath katha tini jani*, “ਅਕਥ ਕਥਾ ਤਿਨਿ ਜਾਨੀ” (ਪੰਨਾ 93) yet it urges and lays down that a true and balanced religious life must be constantly informed and guided by reason and intellectual quest: Man may know and experience God through reason and intellectual activity, *akli sahib sevi ai*. “ਅਕਲੀ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਸੇਵੀਐ” (ਪੰਨਾ 1245)

Since the order of reality revealed through human perception, as the temporal flux, is not ultimately true, therefore, it has sometimes been concluded that the every-day world of socio-political activity is no concern of a serious mind and that a turning back on it is essential for a man of religion. This view Sikhism does not accept. Sikhism concedes that the world of normal experience is not the ultimate Reality, but it regards it as the necessary and proper context and arena in which religion must be practised: “The earth with its aqueous surface, permeated with heat and surrounded by air and atmosphere is the only proper theatre for religion” says Guru Nanak :

* TSR November, 1973.

*pavan pani agni patal,
tis vich dharti thap rakhi dharamsal.*

ਪਵਣ ਪਾਣੀ ਅਗਨੀ ਪਾਤਾਲ ॥

ਤਿਸੁ ਵਿਚਿ ਧਰਤੀ ਥਾਪਿ ਰਖੀ ਧਰਮ ਸਾਲ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 3)

Morality and religion are not the same. An atheist may be a very good an ethical man. It may be, the more civilized a people become, less religious they may grow. As in contemporary Europe, as the work of Civilisation has advanced steadily, the vision of universe beyond or behind the material has steadily faded. It almost appears that growth of social morality is coincidental with a decline in religion: ethics may improve but the sense of sin may decline.

Sikhism considers such a development as essentially immature and erroneous. Sikhism holds that the moral law embedded in the heart of man, *hukam rajai chalna Nanak likhianal*, "ਹੁਕਮੁ ਰਜਾਈ ਚਲਣਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਨਾਲਿ" is a necessary ingredient of religious life throughout, not merely a necessary preliminary. "In everyday life, renounce evil and thus pursue the life of religion." Living experience of ethical excellence is inseparable from realisation of God :

Dutia durmat dur kar gur seva kar nit.

ਦੁਤੀਆ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਦੂਰ ਕਰਿ ਗੁਰ ਸੇਵਾ ਕਰਿ ਨੀਤ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 296)

Nanak durmat chhut gai Parbrahm base chiti.

ਨਾਨਕ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਛੁਟਿ ਗਈ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬਸੇ ਚੀਤਿ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 297)

Sikhism, therefore, hopes that a new generation of mankind grown, used to the new age which scientific knowledge has produced, will be more impressed with what science cannot do than by what it can, and then they will turn from science to religion as they have now been turning from religion to science, and eventually the contradiction between science and religion, and the split between ethics and religion will be resolved and healed.

New social and economic experiments in the world, in recent times, have tended to give new orientation to the concept of 'good'. A moral position encouraged by Communist

regimes promulgates that labour and production are positive ethical values *per se*. The philosophical roots of this concept can be traced to the pre-eminent position which Marxian thought accords to labour and its products and to the programme of forced industrialization. He who is willing to produce much and consume little, thereby contributing to the "material base of socialism" is the hero. This may be called the production-ethics. Opposed to this kind of orientation is a set of values which may be called, leisure-ethics or consumption-ethics. It involves the assumption that leisure and consumption are the higher values and that productive efforts are simply means to the end of greater consumption. This attitude will be regarded by the other view as evil, immoral and counter-revolutionary. Sikhism, while it accepts the social duty of every individual to labour and produce, it denies that it is a good thing *per se*. Sikhism enjoins honest productive work as necessary discipline for a proper religious life, and sharing the fruits thereof with neighbours as a true civilised conduct, conducive to religious experience. "Those who work and produce honestly and then share the fruits of their labour with their neighbours, are on the right path of religion."

ਘਾਲਿ ਖਾਇ ਕਿਛੁ ਰਬਹੁ ਦੇਇ ॥ ਨਾਨਕ ਰਾਗੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਸੇਇ ॥੧॥ (ਪੰਨਾ 1245)

But Sikhism refuses to invest sheer labour and productivity or consumption of material goods with the status of ends-in-themselves. Sikhism, thus, is a way of life that requires constant intellectual curiosity and quest, and a living critical faculty of mind in man, a continuous living desire to know and understand, not only himself but the phenomenon that surrounds him. Such intellectual activity that leads to scientific research, intellectual and artistic creation, is the only true base for the Sikh Way of Life.

STUPID SIKHS*

He loves his bonds who when the first are broke
Submits his neck unto a second yoke.

Robert Henry

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

Since this audience largely consists of Punjabis and* men of Indian origin residing in Canada, I would have preferred to speak here either in Punjabi language or in a simple homely style, so as to communicate to you what my basic ideas are on the subject of Sikhs and Sikhism. But as it is, I have been charged with the task of giving a talk on this subject which has some kind of academic level so that the All Canada Sikh Federation can later on use it as a semi-permanent record for the purpose of communicating it to the non-Sikh Canadians and other English-speaking peoples. Therefore, I humbly request you to bear with me and to be indulgent if sometimes I seem to be speaking somewhat tiresomely.

Sikhs are a religious community and a political nation simultaneously, and thus they are a unique society of the world. The Sikhs are distinguishable from the Hindu society, which is essentially a territorial culture-group. In the ancient Sanskrit texts, Vishnu-purana in particular, it is laid down that Hindus are those born in the geographical area called Bharat and this geographical area is delineated as extending from the Himalayas to Kanya Kumari, Cape Comrin of Europeans, and

* A speech delivered in the Thompson School Auditorium at Vancouver on 7th October, 1974.

from the river Indus to the seas that girdle the soil of India, that is the Arabian sea and the Indian Sea. Essentially, Hinduism is non-exportable and locatable and its modern conversion and oecumenical activities are unsanctioned innovations. Islamic society is grounded in totalitarianism of religious formulae and social laws, enforceable by political sovereignty overlordship over non-muslim societies.

Christendom and Christianity formed a political society of medieval ages and are an oecumenical, universal religion of Gentiles, without being a political society in the modern world.

The Jewish society is basically and fiercely ethnical while Buddhism is fundamentally non-social and non-political.

Sikhism is a social religion, non-ethnical, oecumenical, grounded in a political society, directed and committed to propagation and establishing of a plural world-society, tolerant, open, progressive and free in character.

Thus, Sikhism and the Sikhs form a unique religion and a unique society, which and who can be clearly distinguished from the other religious and political societies of the world.

Arnold Toynbee the world famous historian and philosopher of History, in his *magnum opus*, History refers to Sikhism as the forerunner of the true *elan* of the Communist Party of Lenin. Arnold Toynbee adds that Lenin was quite mistaken in claiming that his Communist party was a unique party in the history of the world and had been formed for the first time. Arnold Toynbee asserts that because of its *elan* and structure, the Khalsa of the Sikh society is a true forerunner and prototype of the Communist party of Lenin.

Sikhism and its apotheosis, the Khalsa, have merely a structure affinity and kinship of *elan* with the Communist Party of Lenin insofar as it is essentially an organization of committed elites for furthering the cause of social transformation, but in aims and content it is poles apart from communism as it is irrevocably committed to social pluralism and freedom of conscience, tolerance and recognition of

human individual as an end in himself, and not an expendable limb in the beehive society of communism.

This aspect of the matter, Arnold Toynbee has failed to appreciate and point out in his great book.

Above all, Sikhism is irrevocably committed to the doctrine of the existence of God, the one almighty God, as the beginning and the end of all, that is and that shall be *alawal walakhir* as the Koran puts it.

Sikhs are an international community about ten millions in numbers mainly concentrated in the north-west of India but found in most continents and countries of the globe : in India, Malaysia, Africa, Europe, South and North America including Canada, Vancouver being their first settlement in North America. There is a quip current in European as well as in Asiatic countries to the effect that wherever life exists and is sustainable on earth the potato and the Sikh are bound to reach there sooner or later.

Arnold Toynbee, in his latest, one of the latest books, not the latest, '*East to west*', has observed to the effect that if the human race survives, its follies at all—he is doubtful that it will survive—but he says that if it survives its follies at all Sikhs shall surely be there as a vigorous hardy and go-a-getting *homo sapiens* on this planet.

Sikhs are universally admitted as excelling most other races of mankind in the basic activities of man; production of food, manipulation of tools and fightings. As agriculturalists, artisan, and manual labour, they excel many other races and human groups, and as soldiers, they are inferior to no group in the history of the world, in bravery inspired by ethical considerations.

The religion of Sikhism was founded, as we know by Guru Nanak who was born in the year 1469 AD. Guru, Guru, in Sikh terminology, means a prophet and a world-teacher and Sikhism is a prophetic religion based on a definitive revelation like Semitic religions of the west, and it, therefore, can be clearly contradistinguished from the eastern religions of

Buddhism, Hinduism and Taoism which have anonymous mysticism as their source of validity. In this sense, and understood in this way, Guru Nanak is the first prophet born in India, as one who claims that the religion he preaches is revealed religion. A revealed religion is one which is imparted through a chosen individual as a consequence of his encounter with God. It is not the result of mystical experience of a facet of reality acquired by an individual through discipline or innate propensity. It is not an impersonal empathy with some eternal truths that are seen by individuals, but which in their origin and formulation are wholly and utterly un-man-made *apaur-ashaya*, such as the Vedas are claimed to be. The religious truths which Guru Nanak preaches have been revealed to him, so Guru Nanak claims, through a direct and face-to-face encounter with God at some level of consciousness, about which our psychological insights and the verbal technology we have acquired and fashioned to express our ideas, are still almost purblind—not only inadequate but almost purblind, incapable of even comprehending and feeling as to what levels of consciousness are where the phenomenon of revelation takes place.

The turning point in the life of Guru Nanak as a prophet and the founder of a revealed religion came in the year 1496 when twenty seven years of age. During these days he was performing his official duties as the Royal storekeeper of the Prince of Sultanpur in the Punjab. He used to, these days, pass out into reveries almost amounting to trances. On one such occasion, while supervising weighment of official store he stopped dead at the count of thirteen which in Punjabi is 'tera' also, "I am thine." And Nanak went on repeating, "tera tera" while measure after measure of stores was being passed out. As would be the case anywhere, complaints were made to the Prince about the way in which this Hindu high official under a Muslim government was recklessly squandering the government stores. Not many days after, while the matter of investigating into his alleged misconduct was still engaging

the attention of the Prince, Nanak went, as usual, to take his morning dip in the small river that during those days flowed very near by the side of the town of Sultanpur. This river is now only seasonal and not perennial as in the fifteenth century. This river, called the *Bein*, is still there, but comes to life only during the rainy season or when the high mountain snows melt. It is recorded in the Life stories of Guru Nanak which are called *Janamsakhis*, that after entering the waters of the *Bein* for a dip, he stayed there for full three days and was assumed as drowned and dead and lost. On the morning of the fourth day he came out of the waters of the river to the spot where his servant, who was to be his lifelong companion, Mardana, was faithfully waiting with Nanak's clothes. The first words that he uttered on emerging from the waters are recorded. He said, "There is no Hindu no Muslim," it was a fit formula for the commencement of his divine mission of reconciling the two antagonistic and warring cultures, the Aryan and the Semitic by pointing out that deeper down in the two, there lay a common substratum of identity. Those acquainted with the doctrines and practices of Yoga know that trance, while submerged for long periods extending over days and months under deep waters, is a Yogic skill that may be acquired either by appropriate discipline or as a God-given skill from birth. It is called, *jalastambhasmadhi*, 'in ancient Yoga texts. There is no need to search for other explanation of Nanak's disappearance in the midstream of *Bein* for full three days.

All the chroniclers of the Stories of the life of Guru Nanak agree that Nanak received his first revelation and his first commission to find and preach a new religion and a new way of life on this occasion.

A revelation is not a psychological process in the individual's mind. It is an encounter with Reality, and the individual, does not make a spiritual discovery through his own mental cogitation, but he encounters God and the distinction is fundamental. Henceforth, Nanak becomes Guru.

Nanak; the world Teacher. This encounter is described in the *Janamsakhis* in the following words:

As God willed, Nanak, his devotee, was escorted to His presence, to the divine presence, and then a cup filled with liquid of immortality was given to him, accompanied by the command: "Nanak, pay attention. This is the cup of holy adoration of my Name; drink it. I am with thee, and thee do I bless and exalt. Go, rejoice in my Name, the Name of God, and preach to others to do the same. Let this be thy calling."

Guru Nanak himself refers to this divine assignment with deep gratitude. He says: "I, am unemployed minstrel, was assigned a very rewarding task, indeed."

Guru Nanak thereafter resigned his post and started on long journeys into all directions of the then accessible civilized world to preach the religion of the Name of God, which is Sikhism. His missionary journeys, throughout the then accessible civilized world of Asia: India, Ceylon, Inner Himalayas, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Arabia and parts of Turkey are recorded in his Life-Stories. He, then Guru himself, recorded his own revelations, as did his successors, which add up to the Sikh scripture. This scripture is now deemed as the only and final guide of the community and in all Sikh temples the scripture occupies a focal point of Sikh congregations, placed upon a high altar and revered. The worship of the Sikhs mainly consists of reading, exposition, and singing of the hymns in praise of God as recorded in the scripture.

During his missionary journeys, which are recorded as four journeys, *udasis*, or odysseys into the four directions of the globe, Guru Nanak laid down and demonstrated the true application of basic Sikh doctrines on which the Sikh society was to be based. It was during his journey to the Inner Himalayas on the mountain of legendary *Kailash* near the celestial lake of Mansrovar that he explained the first priority principle on which the Sikh society was to be based. This was his third journey. It was a long journey and it was to culminate high up in the Kailash mountain the home of Yogis and Hindu

gods. He travelled deep into the Inner Himalayas crossing Nepal and some portions of the western Tibet reaching his destination the holy lake and the mountain summit both of which places now, unfortunately are under the occupation of Communist China and our pilgrims cannot go there, where they have been going and visiting for thousands of years past. It is here that he made a most explicit statement of his doctrine that truth must be the basis of all religions, and further that the religion must be socially committed. Bhai Gurdas, a very learned man of Sikhism—sometimes he is described as the St. Paul of Sikhism—tells us that when the Yogis residing in these inaccessible regions asked Guru Nanak as to “how... did the new sgo in the world of them ortals”— *mat lok main kia vartan*—the reply of the Guru was sharp and to the point: The society has become rotten, to its core. And here he raised an accusing finger at these Yogis, adding; “And Sires, you are the guilty ones, for, society cannot be guided and sustained without men of high sensitivity and culture, but you, who possess it, have become escapees.”

...ਸਚੁ ਚੰਦ੍ਰਮਾ ਕੂੜੁ ਅੰਧਾਰਾ ॥...

ਸਿਧ ਛਪਿ ਬੈਠੇ ਪਰਬਤੀ ਕਉਣੁ ਜਗਤਿ ਕਉ ਪਾਰਿ ਉਤਾਰਾ ॥

(ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ 1/29)

In this doctrine he answers the question of questions, the question which has been, for thousands of years, worrying the sensitive and thinking man and which question still remains finally unanswered. This question of questions is as to whether the carriers of the grace, the liberated men, the men who have achieved the highest apex of spiritual evolution, whether they should rise like lions or die like lambs; whether spiritual elite should withdraw into wilderness to bear witness or act as leaven on the lump. Guru Nanak's answer is clear: 'it is that every fully liberated person must be socially and politically committed and must return back to the society to serve and guide it, to elevate it and to preserve its basic ethical and spiritual values'.

The next doctrine of Sikh society was demonstrated by

Guru Nanak when he visited Mecca, the holy sanctuary of Islam. The story is well-known to almost all who have any acquaintance with Sikhism. This happened during the fourth sojourn of Guru Nanak, when he went to the west to which direction he travelled by sea to visit Mecca along with the Muslim pilgrims of India. Inside this holy sanctuary, when doubts arose on account of his behaviour as to whether he was a Muslim or a Hindu, he was accosted with the question: "Who are you and what is the book that you carry under your arm, for it is not the holy Koran? Tell us, please according to this book that you carry whether the Muslim religion is true or the Hindu religion."

ਪੁਛਨਿ ਫੋਲਿ ਕਿਤਾਬ ਨੋ ਹਿੰਦੂ ਵਡਾ ਕਿ ਮੁਸਲਮਾਨੋਈ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ 1/33)

The reply of the Guru is not only clear but fearless particularly when you keep in view the situation in which this reply was made. The Guru said: "Oh, pilgrims, neither those who profess Islam nor those who profess Hinduism are superior, one to the other. It is the practice and its moral quality that makes one individual superior to the other in the eyes of God, and not mere lip profession."

ਬਾਬਾ ਆਖੇ ਹਾਜੀਆ ਸੁਭਿ ਅਮਲਾ ਬਾਝਹੁ ਦੋਨੋ ਰੋਈ॥ (ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ 1/33)

Likewise, the third doctrine was demonstrated by his 'exclamations' against the tyranny involved in the invasion of India by Babur the Mughal in the year 1521 A.D. He heard of this invasion while he was still in Central Asia and it would seem, that he hurriedly returned to India through Hassan Abdal which is now the Sikh shrine of *Panja Sahib*. *Babar-bani*, gives the proper reaction of a cultured, socially committed man towards situations of this kind; "Where a strong and powerful tyrant tramples over the right and lives of those who have got neither the means nor the power to defend themselves, and nor is there anybody else to defend them." The heartrending cry and audacious question of Guru Nanak put to God is the *Babar-bani* on witnessing the misery caused by Babar's brutalities to undefended and unarmed civilians of

India, 'Just as a herd of meek cows is attacked by a blood thirsty tiger', as Guru Nanak puts it:

ਸਿਰੁ ਮਾਰੈ ਪੈ ਵਗੈ।

There is clearly the seed of his new concept of individual personal and human responsibility of man to be directly concerned with evil on this earth and to resist it instead of either remaining unconcerned and high and dry about it or hoping for extra-terrestrial intervention to destroy it. Guru Nanak has said in the revelation called, *Babar bani*: "So much misery and so much anguish caused to the people and their lamentations, you, O, God, saw and heard all of them and yet you were neither moved nor did you intervene." This is the harsh cry and the question of Guru Nanak in relation to a situation of this kind, implicating that under such circumstances it becomes the duty of an enlightened and spiritually committed person to come forward and to organize with those who are similarly cultured, to resist evil at all stages, resist in the hope and in the faith that God will give success, but never to sit in the corner or on the fence, feeling that it is none of my concern or saying that it is the concern of God alone, whose duty it is to send somebody to stop this evil. The implication is clear God helps those who help themselves. This distinguishes the society that Guru Nanak founded from most of the previous societies that have existed in the East or elsewhere.

These doctrines which Guru Nanak thus enunciated were, by the successor Gurus, demonstrated in relation to individual and contingent situations, were applied to the practical task of setting up a new society, the Sikh society, and at the last of the Sikh prophets the tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, ordained an Order of the Sikh elites the Khalsa who now represent and spearhead the tasks of Sikh religion, and are recognisable throughout the world as bearded and turbaned Sikhs. As it is, Guru Nanak, the first Nanak, had already declared that such elite must organize to leaven and elevate society, using 'organization', *sangat* and 'the idea', *sabad gurmukh*.

as the only legitimate levers available to man for this uplifting. Then the perfected *yogi* of the Kailash Mountains asked Guru Nanak specifically as to how does he propose to eradicate evil and to oppose the tyrant, because no individual has the power to eradicate evil, it being universal and inherent, and no unarmed citizen or group of them has the capacity to oppose and halt the tyranny of a person who has power of well-organised arms at his command, that is, controls the state, and who is bent upon running amuck over the society. And these perfected *yogis* asked Guru Nanak, "Do you possess some miraculous, super natural powers by which you can cure these two deep rooted maladies of the society? If you have not, as a mere human being you are utterly helpless. If you have any such powers, any other means by which you think that the elites and the cultured people can halt the progress of evil, then please tell us." The reply of Guru Nanak to these queries of the *yogis* is recorded. The Guru said, "I possess no such miraculous powers as you refer to. I have no extra psychical potency to do what an average cultured man cannot do, but I am convinced that man, provided he is properly cultured, properly committed and takes a serious view of life, a man, a human being with all his failings and with all his imperfections, is capable not only of halting the progress of evil, but sometimes stopping and eradicating the evil. And the levers which he can use, or which I propose and advise for use in the society which I want to found in the world are two". The Guru is recorded as having said, "I want to use two levers of human organization of those seriously committed to the task of defending goodness and to the task of opposing evil, and I want to use a second lever of the authentic and true idea of religion which is revealed in the conscience of highly sensitive and cultured man. The 'idea' and the 'organisation' which are both human, with these two levers I hope to be able not only to resist the evil, not only to halt the progress of evil in the society, but to elevate and exalt society to heights yet undreamt of."

ਜਿਨਿ ਮਾਣਸ ਤੇ ਦੇਵਤੇ ਕੀਏ.....॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 462)

Through this society I hope to evolve deified men on the earth, who will be God like God-united and yet human."

Such are the basic social and spiritual principles of Sikhism as enunciated by its founder and as perfected by his nine successors, and as apotheosized by the last Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh, into the order of the Khalsa, who now have the responsibility and the assignment of setting out these directives of Guru Nanak into practice, and who now bear the heavy burden of this responsibility of establishing a world-society in which the growth and unchecked march of evil is stopped and the evil is ultimately, if not eradicated, controlled and contained. Such a high task it is that lies on the shoulders of those whom you sometimes see in various parts of the world wearing turbans and unshorn hair. These turbans and unshorn hair are no symptomatic of some kind of lack of modern cultural viewpoint. They are the exteriorisation of a psyche and of a sense of such high mission the like of which the History of the world does not know, that which has never been conceived or practised before.

After the passing of Guru Gobind Singh and after the ordination of the Khalsa, since the beginning of the eighteenth century when Guru Gobind Singh passed away, the Sikhs have played, a by no means insignificant part, in the history of Asia and indirectly, the history of the world. In 1711 they set up a republic in the heartland of the Mughal Empire in India, wherein they gave the land to the tillers in a feudal society, proclaimed equality of all men as citizens of a state, and declared that power emanated from and justly belonged to the people and not to a hereditary privileged class. These remarkable and most modern principles, which were not only avowed but which were put into practice, although for a very short while, are historical phenomena with which not many people in the West or even the East are acquainted, but which if properly understood and appreciated, would make one marvel as to how it was that in a conservative, in a transition

and progress-and-struggle avoiding East such revolutionary and remarkably dynamic ideas could not only spring but could be put into practice and could be applied to actual polity of a state which was founded, but which unfortunately, did not last. This state of the Sikhs lasted only for six or seven years. Emperor Bahadur Shah marched with all the resources of the Mughal Empire from Deccan, the distant south to destroy this Sikh republic in the north of India which extended from confines of Ludhiana to the outskirts of Panipat, the rivers Ravi to Jamuna. It was posted in the heart of the north of India and it had endured, or had it been possible to make it endure for another forty or fifty years, not only the Mughal Empire would have fallen much earlier than it did, but in India itself such a social and political revolution would have been brought about that it would have been India which might have been the forerunner of the modern ideas of equality, liberty and brotherhood which we now credit to the French Revolution, and which now have inspired and enthused modern political activity during the last one century.

There was yet another principle which the Sikhs, inspired as they were by the teachings of the Gurus, proclaimed and actually applied in this short-lived republic. It was on the 10th of December, 1710 that an Imperial Ordinance was issued from Delhi by the Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah, which runs to the effect that :

Nanak prastan ra harkuja kih biyaband ba qatal rasanand.

ਨਾਨਕ ਪ੍ਰਸਤਾਂ ਰਾ ਹਰਕੁਜਾ ਕੀਹ ਬਿਯਾਬੰਦ ਬਾ ਕਾਤਲ ਰਸਾਨੰਦ।

"Every Sikh, wherever he is found, wherever he is seen should be put to death without any hesitation and without any further thought." This was the solution which the Mughal Empire in India had conceived of to solve, that they might have described as, 'the Sikh problem' and it is even a fiercer and a more frightful notion than the one which entered the head of Hitler during the Second World War, when he wanted to accomplish what he euphemistically called, 'the solution of

the Jewish problem' by exterminating every living Jew wherever he could be found and apprehended. This ordinance was issued on the 10th of December 1710 and it was against those people who were small in numbers but were the bearers of the principles of a new society for the purpose of setting up a modern polity for the guidance of world society in the future centuries to come. Their reaction to this Imperial edict of totalitarian and utmost barbarism is worth noting.

As I have already pointed out, on the 10th of December 1710, the royal Ordinance of ruthless destruction of all Sikhs, was issued and on 7th April, 1711 hardly three months, and a few days afterwards an Ordinance in reply was issued by the Sikh Republic under the seal and sign manual of their chief executive, Banda Singh Bahadur which said and proclaimed: '*We do not oppose Muslims or Islam but only tyranny and usurpation of power*'. The substance of this Ordinance of the Sikh Republic is recorded in contemporary documents such as, Persian *Ruquati Aminul davollah Dastural-Insha*, and the Imperial Daily Diaries, the day to day record made by Authority of what passed in the Royal Court. They are now available for everybody to see, that hardly three months after this drastic Ordinance which was issued for the utter destruction of the Sikh people, the Sikhs had the political maturity and the greatness of heart to reply by issuing an Ordinance which said '*We do not oppose Muslims and we do not oppose Islam. We only oppose, tyranny and we only oppose the usurpation of political power which belongs to the people and not a privileged individuals or to Mughals*'. This outlook, this temper, this sentiment, is so democratic, of such high cultural calibre and such exalted ethics, that it would not be easy, you may search the pages of the contemporary history of those days, seventeenth and eighteenth and nineteenth century history, you will not come across its equal or its parallel in the political policies and practices of a state anywhere in the world of those days.

After that, ladies and gentlemen, when this initial effort

of establishing a Sikh republic in the heart of northern India failed, in which republic the Sikhs tried to apply the high principles of ethics and politics enunciated by the Sikh Gurus, there comes a period of about half a century of relentless persecution and genocide programmes against the Sikh people by two contending empires, the mightiest Empire of Asia of those days the Mughal and the Pathan Empire. The Pathan Empire persecuted and tried to uproot the Sikhs and to destroy them, root and branch, under the leadership of Ahmed Shah Abdali, one of the Greatest Generals of the stature of Chenghez Khan, Halaku and Nadir, the Greatest Generals which Asia has produced. Under his might and under his Generalship and that of his successors, for almost fifty years, the Pathans as well as the Mughals tried their worst and tried their utmost to cow down the Sikhs, to finish the Sikhs and to make them submit. But the Sikhs withstood this terrible onslaught. They neither submitted nor abandoned their harsh cry of 'death or liberty', a sentiment foreign to and unknown in the Eastern societies, ancient or modern. This is a sentiment which is unique in the history of Asia, though in Europe you do find traces of it. But for fifty years, under the most callous and under the most terrible persecutions where the aim was complete genocide, the Sikhs not only refused to submit but refused to abandon their cry, "We want death or liberty! We want death or liberty" And in the end they had their liberty. Sikh supremacy was then established and then it slid into the form of the Sikh Empire, which was called the *Sarkar Khalsa*, that is the people's common-wealth, from the middle of the eighteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century.

The Sikh hegemony then extended from the Jamuna River the heartland of India, to the modern frontiers of Afghanistan and from Indus up to the Little Tibet, the confines of China. Here, what is most noteworthy is that when the Sikh commonwealth was undergoing the throes of death by the treacherous British and by the treacherous non-Sikh Generals of the Sikh army and by the perfidious non-Sikh civil

government at Lahore, the Sikhs made fresh conquests into the regions of north Himalayas, conquering and annexing that territory which has now again been occupied by China, and the Little Tibet. What is of crucial interest in this story is not so much the conquest and the annexation of these most difficult regions at a time when the Sikhs were themselves fighting for their very life, being attacked from the front as well as from the rear, but what is most remarkable about this incident is the Treaty of 1842 by which these areas were annexed to the *Sarkar Khalsa*, to the Sikh Empire. This treaty is now preserved in the archives of the Government of India at Delhi, and anybody who is so inclined may go and have a look at it. This treaty is between two parties; on one side is mentioned the Emperor of China and the Dalai Lama of Tibet—that is one party in this treaty and the other party is described as *Khalsa jio*, the Honourable Khalsa, as representing the people's sovereignty. This idea in itself is so novel and sounds so modern that it would be impossible to find its similitude and its parallel, in those days even in the West. In the West, these ideas at that time, were filtering into the minds of the people, but they had not yet been put to practical demonstration in relation to a political polity and as operative ideas; people sitting in chains, people writing pamphlets and people calling themselves revolutionaries—they were considering these ideas and their minds were being stirred by these ideas and later on these ideas did become of practical importance in the political impulses of the West. But in the West, as yet, these ideas had not been put into concrete political shape, as they had been put by the Sikhs in the year 1842. This high level of evolution of political awareness and instinct was not a common phenomenon.

It was in the middle of the nineteenth century that the British perfidiously attacked the Sikh Common Wealth after corrupting and buying the Hindu Generals of the Sikh army and the Hindu dominated civil government at Lahore and during the fierce Anglo Sikh wars and battles, "the Sikhs", as a historian says, "beat the British and their Hindu mercenaries

to their knees every time". I am quoting. But the Sikh country was, nevertheless, annexed to the British Empire through treachery at the diplomatic table, into the details of which I need not go here. Now I come to the years before 1947. Before the 1st World War, when the ideas of freeing India from the foreign yoke started stirring the minds of the Indian people, Sikhs were the spearhead of this movement. It was from this place, Vancouver, that as far back as the year 1913, a batch of about two hundred Sikhs in all, there were two or three non-Sikhs, the rest of them all were Sikhs, simple, manual labourers and peasants but genuine Sikhs, whose faith in the Guru and the teachings of the Guru was firm and unsullied. These Sikhs sailed from Vancouver with a plan to topple down the British Empire through mutinous activities in the Indian army. They failed. Most of them were arrested, they were hanged. Many of them were sent to the terrible Andaman islands and they spent their lives there, twenty years, twenty-five years; died there under conditions of imprisonment which you can not even imagine these days. Such hardships and such terrible conditions of existence they bore, and not a case of a single Sikh is known who either wavered or apologized though many opportunities were offered them to just say one word. "We are sorry for what we have done" and they could come back to their villages and to their lands and live a life of comfort and ease as their other compatriots were doing. (Applause) It is recorded in the official records that whenever these Sikhs were taken to the execution room to be hanged—some of you perhaps know how people are hanged. I know it. I have supervised some hangings as they used to be done during the British period. You put black clothes on the person, previously giving him an opportunity to bathe his body, and then you tie his hands behind him and then you walk him to the gallows or execution room. You make him stand under the gallows and put the rope around his neck, and then a question is put to him. "Is there anything you want to say as a last word?" First of all " Answer, are you so and so ?" He says,

'Yes I am so and so.' "Well you are going to be hanged for such and such a crime, and now we are going to pull the lever and the rope will kill you, suffocate you to death. Is there anything you want to say before your end comes?" This is the question that is usually put, and its answer is recorded. But to these Sikhs another question was frequently put: "Are you now prepared to say. I am sorry for what I have done, and the noose will be taken off your neck and you will be set free?" Each one of them, without an exception, is recorded as saying, "No, I am not sorry for what I have done" and "when I take my next birth I will do the same. I want the British to leave and free India." (Applause) And then the question would be put "Now, so and so, what are the last words you want to say before your life on this earth comes to an end?" In each case, I wouldn't vouchsafe for that but I have seen some of the files. May be in one or two cases, very few cases, not but generally, they sang the following song:

ਰਾਜ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਆਕੀ ਰਹੇ ਨਾ ਕੋਇ ।
 ਖਵਾਰ ਹੋਇ ਸਬ ਮਿਲੇਗੇ ਬਚੇ ਸ਼ਰਨ ਜੋ ਹੋਇ ।
 ਦਿਲੀ ਤਖਤ ਪਰ ਬਹੇਗੀ ਏਹ ਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਫੌਜ ।
 ਰਾਜ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਬੜੀ ਹੋਏਗੀ ਮੈਜ ।

(Applause) The People shall rule and no individual shall usurp their sovereignty. The destiny of India shall be shaped by the Khalsa and an era of ever growing affluence and peace shall dawn for mankind These are the last words they usually uttered and those are recorded.

There is another incident recorded in the Memoirs (Punjabi) of Bhai Randhir Singh, who spent about, I think, twenty years in British jails. He also belonged to this group, the Mutineers, *ghadarites*, as they were called. It happened, in one jail in the Madras Presidency in the South of India. I have forgotten the name of the jail, into which about a dozen Sikhs had been brought from the Andamans and these were the Sikhs about whom the authorities thought they had suffered enough. They were young men, thirty, forty years old when

they went to jail, and now they were sixty, seventy, their lives spent under unspeakable horrors and tortures in these hell-houses. They were brought to this jail in the Madras Presidency, as I have already said. Then a Sikh of the Government Secret Police went there in civilian clothes. Previous instructions had come that these five or six who were known as the most staunch antagonists of the foreign occupation of India, and about whom it was known that their ideological maturity was of a high order, instructions were given previously that they should be accorded slightly better treatment, given better food, less hard labour to soften them to mollify them a little. And then one day, three or four days after, this Sikh, his name is, perhaps, also given, he was some high official, he came there and he said: I have come from Punjab. I belong to such-and- such village. Most of you know my people and you, so-and-so, you, my uncle, are related to me by kinship, you, this, that, he tried to be friendly and tried to reassure them of his good intentions. And he continued 'I have been specifically sent here by the British Indian Government and my purpose in coming here is as follows: 'You did something. The government now realizes that you did it out of conviction. The government does not think that you are ordinary criminals. On the contrary the government thinks that you are men of character and of high patriotism and you have by now paid the price of your convictions. The government, after all is not an inhuman government. It is a human government. Now they propose to open up some areas for colonization. There they also want to allot pieces of land to the villages from which you came and the government thinks that it would be unfair, not fitting to the sense of fairness of the British, to deprive you people of that to which you are entitled as residents of your villages. Your kinsmen in your villages from which you come have been given plots of land, and the government wants you also to have such plots of land. They don't want you to apologize. We know you will not apologize because you are men of stubborn convictions.

All that we want is that when we free you - we will free you and we will also give you free grants of land, and you go and cultivate those lands, but from now onwards, when these lands are given to you and you start farming those lands, you just give us a gentleman's word, no formal apology, nothing of the sort, a gentleman's assurance that you will not participate in any activity which is anti-government.

They all kept quiet; nobody spoke. And then he said, "Is there any of you who wants his name to be communicated to the British Indian Government for the allotment of these free grants of land?" All of them simultaneously said, "No," And then there was a European officer who during all these proceedings was sitting silent. He said, "Those of you who want to oppose the British Government till their last breath on this earth, please step one step forward." All those six or so people stepped one step forward. (Applause)

Such was the society which the principles of Sikhism gave birth to and such is the history and tribulations of this society which though, on the material plane may seem to have failed to make a conspicuous mark but which, on the plane of principles and on the plane of essence has made such a remarkable imprint, a superior to which would be difficult to find in the histories of the societies of the world, from ancient times to the modern times.

When in 1947, the British in 1946 or even earlier, the British gave it out that they no longer wanted to hold India and it was known that they cannot hold India and it was also known that the British would now quit, and they wanted to hand over the sovereignty and the political power of India to the Indians themselves, then the question arose, how and to whom should this political power be transferred? I will not go into details, because there is neither time nor would it be pertinent on this occasion in the short time we have at our disposal to go into these details. But the broad outlines are that the : British Parliament, who were penultimate authority in this matter of the transfer of power, declared unequivocally

that after the British quit India, there are three distinct peoples who are the legitimate heirs to the sovereignty of India, and whatever these three peoples or three 'nations' agree to amongst themselves, their decision the British will accept before they quit India, though they tendered it as their own advice that it was the wish of the British people that they should leave India united and "intact", and it should not be divided into bits. That would be a tragedy for India, a setback, they felt, to what they had accomplished while they occupied India, and it would also be not in the interests of the international political situation. On all these grounds the British advised, vehemently and consistently advised, that India should remain one and united and that these three, the only legitimate heirs to the sovereignty of India, should come to some kind of mutual agreement, so that the sovereignty of India, the political power of the State of India, can be transferred peacefully, so that India may remain one and united. It is at this period that offers were made, either for keeping, India intact and one, or for dividing it into three parts. I am only talking here about the case of the Sikhs. I will leave out the Muslims, they have achieved their Pakistan as they wanted it. Under what circumstances they wanted it, who forced them to, whether they were badly advised or just obliged, are questions which are of no practical interest now. What has happened and cannot be easily undone. But about the Sikhs, definite concrete and pressing offers were made half a dozen times by the Muslim League, as well as by the British, to the Sikhs to carve out and to have an area for themselves in which they can also be a free people, not altogether unlike the Hindus and Muslims are going to be. There is no doubt about it, because I am a personal witness to some of these occasions and there is such heavy and credible documentary evidence on the point that it cannot be doubted or denied. But on each and every occasion, totally trusting the commitments which the Hindu leaders of the Indian Congress had made to the Sikhs, the Sikhs always spurned these offers. Whenever the

British made these offers, the Sikhs said, "No, we tie our destiny irrevocably to the destiny of India because India is our holy land and our Fatherland, and the type of society which Guru Gobind Singh wanted to found and the type of world-society which the Khalsa wants to spearhead can more easily and more firmly be established, to begin with, on the soil of India, because India is likely to be more readily recipient of those ideas than most of the rest of the world. Therefore, our destiny lies with India and not outside it. The promises and commitments which the Hindu leaders made to the Sikhs were as follows that after the British quit and the Sikhs have refused to accept the offers of separate, sovereign or semi-sovereign areas for themselves made by others, after that happens, the Hindu majority-the Indian Congress, the mouthpiece of the Hindus as they rightly regarded themselves-the Hindu majority community solemnly promised, first, that they will not promulgate any Constitution for the future government of India which does not have the free concurrence and assent of the Sikhs; two, that an area in the north of India, with an autonomous status shall be carved out in which, in the flowery words of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru, "the Sikhs also might feel the glow of freedom," which means, "therein the Sikhs shall be able to act effectively at the decision making levels of their state." These promises were given from the year 1930 onwards up to the year 1947. These promises were repeatedly given and reiterated, these promises were repeatedly spell out, and they were repeated by individual leaders and by the formal resolution of the All-India Congress again and again, including by Mahatama Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Jawahar Lal Nehru, and all these people, that, whatever else may come to pass, so far as the Sikhs are concerned the Hindu community and the Hindu people stand irrevocably committed to this promise which, Jawaharlal Nehru said, while introducing the basic resolution in the Constituent Assembly, in 1950, has the status of a religious vow', the promises being: one, no Constitution in India shall be framed to which Sikhs do not give their free

unfettered assent, two, in the north of India an autonomous area will be carved out in which the Sikhs shall be effective and conclusive at the decision making levels.

Then the British left India, and the Sikhs stuck to their stand unshakeably, regarding so-called their understanding with the Hindu leaders, but after August 1947 nothing was done to put these promises into effect, and they seemed to have been forgotten, and slowly and slowly attempts were made to win over and corrupt the individual integrity of Sikh leaders. And then in 1950, the Constitution of India was framed. Nothing was included therein which may have even the remotest semblance to a fulfilment of these two solemn commitments which were made to the Sikhs. Thus, the Sikhs had been tricked to give up their right of sovereignty, their right of being legitimate heirs to the power and sovereignty of India. And when in 1953, Master Tara Singh asked Jawaharlal Nehru, "Why is it that you people who kept us misled under false promises, as it now seems, for over twenty years and which promises you repeated again and again, solemnly and on behalf of the entire Hindu people, why have you now gone back on them?" The reply of Jawaharlal Nehru was pat and unabashed "*Circumstances have now changed.*"

Well, Ladies and Gentlemen, the constitutionality of these political tricks and manoeuvres might be debatable but their gross unethically and cynicity, their low perfidious character, is all too obvious. In the Constituent Assembly, when the Act was passed in 1950, the only two Sikhs, Akali Dal representatives there, stood up and they declared a declaration which is inscribed in the permanent proceedings of the Indian Parliament: *The Sikhs do not accept this Constitution. The Sikhs reject this Constitution.* Nobody paid the slightest attention to what they were saying, although these Sikhs refused to sign the original copy of the Indian Constitution, which now lies displayed in the library of the Indian Parliament House. They, the Sikhs, were just ignored, just as you would ignore the pariah dogs in the street when

you are walking back home after a day's work well-done, completely ignored. This was done in gross violation of the provisions of the British Parliament's Transfer of power Act of 1947 also. In that Act it is specifically provided that the Indian Government at the Centre shall be a Federal loose centre government, having only powers on three subjects: communications, defence and foreign affairs. All other powers shall go to the federating units, the states. It shall be a federal government, it shall not be a highly centralized government. In spite of these legal provisions the Constituent Assembly, which was packed with the brute majority of only one community, made a constitution which establishes a highly centralized government, entirely in the hands of one community, the majority community and completely denies the Sikh identity. And ever-since 1947 persistent, calculated, well-planned and regular attempts have been made on the cultural, on the political and on the economic levels, not only to disintegrate the *Khalsa*, the collectivity of the Sikh people, once and for all, but to weaken the Sikh citizens economically in such a manner that they are reduced to the status of what is known as, peonage, so that the highest ambition of a Sikh citizen after some time might remain delimited only to become a peon, a night watchman at the palatial door of rich Hindu industrialist a driver of his commodious, foreign imported car and a mere lowest rank soldier in the army, so as to provide cannon-fodder whenever the rulers of Delhi wish to pick up a quarrel with somebody.

These, Ladies and Gentlemen, are hard facts, and if I have an ampler opportunity either before you or before any other independent forum of the world. I am in a position to, and I am confident that I can, establish that what I say is literally and more than amply true. There it is, Gentlemen, or Ladies, where we now stand.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I have taken a great deal of your time, and I am grateful that you have heard me with much patience and, as I have noticed with great attention. I would

therefore, conclude, and try to sum up in a few propositions that what I have been trying to convey here.

1. Sikhism is not a Hindu sect but a prophetic religion and a unique political society, guided and led by an Order of the elite Sikhs, the Khalsa, whose unshorn hair and turbans are merely an exteriorisation of their religious psyche, natural, spontaneous, evolutionary, and authentic. This is the first proposition which I have tried to elucidate before you.
2. The second proposition which I have tried to make out before you is that Sikhism enjoins a religion grounded in truth alone, a growing truth in the enlightened conscience of man and sternly translated into day-to-day living of individuals.
3. The third proposition which I have tried to put before you, to demonstrate before you, is that the Sikhs are committed to help establishment of a world-society which is plural, non coercive, expansive and forward-looking, motivated Godwards, in which there is maximum toleration, ever-growing affluence and minimum of mutually destructive ambition. And on the basis of this, I want to observe in the form of the fourth proposition.
4. The mosaic-pattern of Canadian society comes nearest to the Sikh ideal of a world-society, though the Canadian society is not, in every respect and in essence, its replica or prototype.
5. And the last proposition which I now formulate in precise words is, that, while, as Canadian citizens, the Sikhs may look forward to a hopeful and bright future, in India, their historical homeland. They now face the basic problem of their identity and existence, since the control of their own history has been snatched out of their hands and their historical potential has been submerged and throttled.
6. And I add, that the Sikhs want to live, as all living things do; they do not want to die.

Thank you (Applause)

NAMDHARI MARTYRS OF MALERKOTLA*

I have noted with utmost pain and disappointment certain recent writings in *The Sikh Review*, and elsewhere by certain eminent Sikhs castigating our brethren, the Namdhari Sikhs, blown up by the British hot-headed officials with field guns, on the ground of these brave martyrs having justly punished a number of audacious cow-killing butchers.

As will be readily conceded, I am not a Kuka, nor in any other manner under their influence and am proud of being and claim to be, just a humble servant of the Panth, like, though not equal to, my friend Dr. Ganda Singh, and Lieut Colonel Gulcharan Singh, both of whom have declared these butchers as "law-abiding citizens" and the brave Namdhari martyrs of Malerkotla as "criminals."

It is a pity that both of them—the doyan of Sikh historiographer and the brave Sikh Colonel—have displayed gross ignorance of (1) the relevant facts, (2) the issues involved and (3) the true significance of the conspicuous martyrdom of these proud and self-respecting Namdhari Sikhs of whose deeds the Panth should be justly proud.

It is wholly incorrect that the Namdhari Sikhs, wantonly and without just provocation, killed these particular butchers. Earlier, these butchers had taunted a number of Sikhs who had protested against their cruelly slaughtering an exhausted bullock on a public road, on grounds of humanitarian decencies, by pointing out that the Sikhs were no more the

* TSR—October, 1975.

sovereign people in their own homeland. This high audacity on the part of these wretched butchers could properly be answered by the Namdharis only by asserting their claim "which one of them publicly reiterated before being blown up by the British guns: "We are the rightful sovereigns of this country and our laws must prevail as opposed to those of the Ferrangi usurpers", (*Raj asada te kursi asadi*. ਰਾਜ ਸਾਡਾ ਤੇ ਕੁਰਸੀ ਸਾਡੀ). The execution of these miserable and impertinent butchers had thus become imperative, and the true Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh, that these brave and glorious Namdharis were, did the only thing that was called for under the circumstances and unflinchingly paid the price demanded of them by the usurpers of the Sikh sovereignty.

Again, students of Indian History are aware that Muslim occupation of India, throughout the centuries, was visibly signified by unlicensed and public slaughter of kine to impress upon the non-Muslim third rate citizens of Muslim India that their persons, their goods, their womenfolk, their religion and their human dignity, were all forfeited. The spiritual spokesman of Muslim hegemony over Indian non-Muslims, the Hindus and the Sikhs, Shaikh Sirhandi, the Mujjadad, has unequivocally asserted in his *Maktubat* that "public killing of kine is the highest Muslim imperative in India", *Zibah-I-baqr dar hindustan sh'ar-i-a' zam-islam ast*. It was in this historical tradition that wherever and whenever Hindus or Sikhs were able to assert their own autonomy and freedom from humiliating Muslim subjugation, kine-killing was forbidden as a public policy, and that is why the perfidious Britishers made public kine-killing lawful and general in the annexed Punjab and gratuitously and devilishly established a public kine-slaughter house adjoining to the precincts of the Golden Temple which also they had annexed.

The Panth should take pride in the fact that, even during those dark days, there were Namdhari Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh's *Khlasa* who were sensitive and alive to the real issue involved here and who reacted as proud and freemen should.

It is wrong to confuse this basic issue of political discernment and a freeman's character and fundamental rights with the minor and irrelevant issues of (a) whether cow-worship is enjoined in Sikhism, (b) whether modern Hindu truly believes in cow-worship, or (c) whether cow-worship is an integral part of Hindu credo, or (d) whether the Malerkotla butchers or those, desecrators of the dignity of the Golden Temple, were acting in accordance with "the law" as laid down by the lawless, perfidious, British usurpers of the Sikh sovereignty.

The answer to the issue (a) is clearly in the negative; to the issue (b) is also in the negative; to the issue (c) is in the affirmative, while the issue (d) is ridiculously puerile here, of interest only to some petty, stipendiary Third Class Magistrate, and wholly unfit for an illustrious historiographer or a gallant colonel to consider as the central issue in the episode of the Namdhari martyrs of the losing decades of the 19th century.

I salute these brave, peerless and deathless martyrs, the Singhs of Guru Gobind Singh's Khalsa. May their spirit never die amongst the Sikhs, which spirit alone possesses the potency of raising our community up from its present state of intellectual squalor, spiritual degeneration and all-round degradation.

SIKHISM AND POLITICS

In the June, 1971 issue of The Sikh Review appeared an article by a writer who prefers to remain anonymous, under the caption, "Sikhism, Its Outer and Inner Aspects".

The main thesis he would establish is that Sikhism goes ill with political activity, that its spirit is opposed to a striving for positions of political power at decision-making levels and that the Sikh ideal, as embodied in Guru Granth Sahib is hostile to any political power and status for the Sikhs as such.

This is his main thesis, but he has also taken liberties to cast doubts at the bonafides and sanity of those who have led the Sikh struggle during the last 34 years, for the establishment of some respectable political status for the Sikh people in a free India. He argues against the Punjabi Unilingual State by trying to show that in it the political power led to dispersion of the Sikh society into caste and clan and devolution of Punjabi as the official language.

That may well be the case though the argument that the malady is the desire for political power and not improper exercise thereof might be questioned. Further on, however, the writer permits himself to indulge in insinuatory and contemptuous attitude towards all such politicians who plead for a respectable constitutional status for the Sikh people in a free India. He says, "As though the experience of the Punjabi Suba was not enough, now there is a demand for a 'Sikh homeland', *within the Indian Union* !"

Firstly, he puts the word 'homeland' within inverted commas and secondly, he puts the word 'within the Indian union' in italics. and thirdly he places an exclamation mark

at the end. What he intends to convey is clear and may be paraphrased as follows:

'The word "Homeland" (devalued by him as 'homeland') is a crude if not exactly a meaningless political term. The demand for the Sikh Homeland 'within the Union of India' is silly and self-contradictory and conceived by politically immature and stupid politicians.' The sign of exclamation at the end means that, 'the Sikhs who demand the Sikh Homeland properly belong to some place where their physical movements are kept under strict professional control and where they can receive proper medical attention to cure their minds of feebleness and derangement.'

It is not for the first time that a self-confident and self-assured Sikh has intruded into the printed page to condemn all desire and urge for a political status for the Sikhs, and against any demand for such constitutional status and territorial adjustments wherein the Sikh interests can survive and develop without hindrances and hurdles that are implicit in the current political trends and the Constitutional Act of India.

Not long ago a well placed and highly educated Sikh, an affluent barrister-at-law, a citizen of the United Kingdom, cracked down in the columns of *The Sikh Courier* of U.K. on an English lady professor in the London university for having stated that the natural destiny of the Sikh people in India was to have some kind of autonomous status in the north of India. The Sikh barrister-at-Law argued that the litany, *Raj karega Khalsa* which is believed to have been uttered by Guru Gobind Singh himself, and which has been and is repeated by Sikhs throughout the world, at the end of every congregational prayer ever since 1710 A.D. does not mean that the Sikh people must struggle for political autonomy for themselves in their Homeland, but that the litany itself simply means that at some point of history the Sikh people shall acquire a sovereign status. This Sikh legal luminary then pointed out that this prophecy of the Guru had already been fulfilled as the Sikhs did acquire and

enjoy a sovereign status during the first half of the 19th century in the north-west of India. He went on to argue that, now to dream for another spell of political autonomy for the Sikhs was, in some way, to show a form to mental imbecility such as might lead to disastrous consequences for Sikhism and the Sikh people, both.

The writer of these lines then pointed it out that the litany, '*Raj karega Khalsa*' does not mean that the Sikh people shall enjoy an autonomous political status once upon a time and never again and that anybody who understands simple Punjabi syntax should be able to appreciate the point.

Some time ago, an esteemed gentleman, Santokh Singh has written and published a paper-back, *Gursikh ate Raajniti* of 16 pages in which he has extensively quoted from Guru Granth Sahib to establish his cherished thesis that politics is forbidden to a Sikh and that the sole religious and social duty of a Sikh is to repeat the Name of God, to join his hands in supplication and submission before his neighbours and adversaries and to earn his livelihood as best as he can, within these limitations. On the title page of this paper back is a drawn picture of two soft, well manicured and white sleeved male hands joined in supplication in prayer to God as well as a gesture of submission to his non-Sikh neighbours. This paper-back has been widely circulated through post to the addresses of all such Sikhs who are deemed as guilty of preaching that the Sikh people must be accorded a distinct autonomous status in a free India such as can guarantee the Sikhs free development as citizens of India. There can be no mistake about either the enthusiasm and aims of Sardar Santokh Singh of Chandigarh or about the amplitude of his material resources which he seems to be eager to press into the service of what he believes to be the cause of true Sikhism.

There is another untiring Sikh writer of New Delhi, who has written extensively articles and books to establish that in the light of the Doctrines of Psychoanalysis, political power and exercise thereof are fatal to the proper integration of

human personality and that the teachings of the Sikh 'Gurus are, when properly interpreted by Psychoanalysts in accordance with the insights of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung.'

How interesting it would be if some competent psychoanalysts undertake to cross-examine a cross-section of these theorists of complete renunciation of political power by relaxing them on a clinical couch, under proper hypnotic trance to find out what precise complexes are at the root of such literary effusions peculiar only to Sikh writers and intellectuals, the symptoms of which complexes hardly, if ever, exhibit themselves in the case of Hindus and Muslims and other classes of citizens of India. Hindus, one can understand, need not go into such speculative exercises as to whether it is more desirable to be one's own master or to be a slave. They already have their grip firmly on the levers of political power in India while Muslims are too well-entrenched in their firm attitudes towards this question of political power. But the other groups and communities of India who are never known in history to have aspired for participation in political power, the *sudras*, the untouchables, the so-called *Harijans*, the *Nagas*, *Adivasis*, the *Kabir-panthis*, the *Dadu-panthis* and a host of others never burst out into print to cry out that political power or participation therein was a sin or a poison and that it constitutes the greatest danger to their purity of existence if any of their class ever would aspire to it. But the Sikhs do it, again and again and sturdily and persistently. This is a most intriguing and amazing phenomenon of current Indian scene which, perhaps some competent psychoanalyst can explain. We, who have the misfortune to have known politics from inside know the answer but prefer not to spell it out. Let us, however, briefly examine three broad questions which disturb these Sikh intellectuals again and again.

Is aspiration for political power and desire to participate in its exercise alien to Sikh doctrines? Is it opposed to the spirit of the evolutionary movement of Sikh people? Again is it misconceived or unprofitable to ask for some kind of

autonomous State for the Sikh people within a free India? Lastly, is the demand for Sikh Homeland within the Union of India stupid and impracticable politics? Let the last question be gone into first.

The demand for the Sikh Homeland is formally enshrined in the basic Resolution passed at the All India Annual Akali Conference held at Ludhiana in the temporary town called, Ranjit Nagar, in December, 1966.

This demand has three ingredients: firstly, it says that a specified area in which would be included the present Punjab, the Ganganagar District of Rajasthan, the Sirsa area of Hissar District, Shahabad and Guhla areas of Karnal District, Kalka and Pinjore, the Ambala Sadar area, *desh* area of Nalagarh, and Dalhousie etc. should be formed into a single unilingual Punjabi State.

Its second ingredient is that, this State should be accorded the same autonomous status which was given to the State of Jammu and Kashmir in the Constitution Act of India as first put on the Statute Book in 1950.

Lastly, this demand requires that the Constitution Act of India should concede that this State shall be deemed as the Sikh Homeland and that in this State the Sikh interests shall be of special importance.

Now, there is nothing *prima facie* ridiculous in this demand as some clever Sikh intellectuals, without studying the question properly, try to make out again and again. This area does constitute the Sikh Homeland along with certain other areas which have now gone to Pakistan. "Sikh Homeland" is not a word which has been coined by some armchair and mischievous Sikh politician, but it is an expression which occurs in the writings of Europeans, competent to speak on the affairs of India, and written more than a century ago. It was in the forties of the 19th century that Sir Needham Cust wrote his *Oriental and Linguistic Essays*, a book which has been regarded with respect by those eager to understand Indian affairs and problems. In this book he says that from Jammu

to Jhelum and from Panipat to the foothills of Shivaliks is the area which constitutes the Sikh Homeland. And yet again and again, a special class of Sikh intellectuals, burst into the Press with jokes and contempt, aimed at those associated with the term, 'Sikh Homeland':

What frenzy has of late possessed the brain,
Though few can write still fewer can refrain.

Again, there can be nothing ridiculous or stupid in demanding a unilingual State of such areas of this Sikh Homeland which are still left in India i.e. Bharat. Unilingual States are an established feature of our Public Policy and a Sikh politician cannot be made butt of cheap jokes simply because he makes a demand which is in complete conformity with the Public Policy of his country! To ask for an autonomous status for a State such as was willingly conceded to Jammu and Kashmir by the Constituent Assembly in 1950, surely cannot be construed either as an act of treason or an act of peculiar Sikh stupidity. The only special characteristic of the demand for Sikh Homeland is the requirement that the Constitution of India should concede that in this area the Sikh interests shall be of special importance. If a mere mention of Sikh interests irritates and annoys some Sikh intellectuals, it should be spelt out clearly, because preservation of Sikh interests does not mean destruction of non-Sikh interests such as might violate the strict sense of justice of these high minded people. This constitutional provision would be only a directive of policy to be interpreted within the framework of our Constitution Act by the judicial courts of the country in relation to each and every measure that a democratically elected Legislative Assembly of the Sikh Homeland may pass or determine. It is merely to be a guarantee against application or operation of any law, policy or measure that ends to or aims at hitting at the basic Sikh interest, that of freely existing, developing and maturing within the geographical and political context and framework of the Sikh Homeland. It will also

legitimatize such laws, measures and policies that can be shown to be positively necessary to preserve Sikh entity. It is a political question as to whether such a safeguard and guarantee may be given to the Sikhs within the constitutional framework of India without impinging upon the legitimate rights of other citizens. It can be demonstrated through argument and dialogue that such a demand is necessary, legitimate and permissible. Surely, on this ground, then, no cheap jokes may be flung at those who uphold this demand for Sikh Homeland.

There is nothing in this demand for Sikh Homeland which is unconstitutional, which is ill-conceived, which is unpatriotic or which is symptomatic of political illiteracy or mental under-development, the type of insinuations which are constantly being flung not only to those who are hostile to the Sikh people as such, but more so by those who consider themselves as self-appointed, special custodians of purity of the Sikh doctrine.

Is Sikhism a Church of worship or a Church of social policy also? This is the fundamental question. Our Sikh intellectuals insist on arguing that Sikhism is merely a Church of worship and that the social policy and hence participation in political activities and power is none of its concern.

Now, those who have studied not only the evolution of Sikh history carefully but also the documentary material that has been unearthed during the last 20 or 30 years are fully aware that movements of schism, by the followers of Dhirmal, Ram Rai, Harbhagat, the *Niranjania* of Jandiala, which movements, the Sikh Gurus in their lifetime and the Sikh people subsequently have tried to suppress and extirpate root and branch, through all legitimate means available, were movements which were inspired by the doctrine that either Sikhism should remain unconcerned altogether with social policy and political activity or it should fall in line with the ruling Muslims so as to become their camp-followers. The substitute scripture which the Dhirmalias compiled, more

voluminous than the Guru Granth, contains a distinct chapter on *Var Piran Paikambran ki*, accepting the Semitic line of Prophets and saints of Islam as legitimate and authoritative and about *Niranjanias*, the author of *Tarikh-i-Hussainhi* (1798 A.D.) tells us that 'these Sikhs strictly follow basic injunction of Islam and are aspirants for entry into Muslim Society.' Ram Rai, as we know, was not even averse to suitable alterations in the text of the Guru Granth itself to suit the imperial policies of a theocratic Muslim State. Against these trends the Sikh Gurus and the Sikh people in their historical development have waged relentless struggle and bloody battles and it is precisely this doctrine and these trends which a class of Sikh intellectuals now persist, should be introduced into the policy of the Sikhs.

Raj Karega Khalsa is not an apocrypha or a fabrication *kachi bani*, as Sardar Santokh Singh of Chandigarh tells us, but it is there in the earliest Sikh records, the *Janamsakhi* of Guru Nanak by Bhai Bala in its Appendix, called, *Karni nama*. In this Appendix these words are spoken by Guru Nanak himself, the same Guru Nanak, who in the Guru Granth proclaims that 'the God he worshipped was a God who was a destroyer of earthly tyrants'

Asur samgharan raam hamaara.

ਅਸੁਰ ਸਘਾਰਣ ਰਾਮੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 1028)

This *Raj karega Khalsa* is then reiterated in the *Rahitnama* Bhai Nand Lal, almost contemporaneous with Guru Gobind Singh. Also it is confirmed in the *Suraj Prakash* (1840 A.D.) of Bhai Santokh Singh and *Prachin Panth Prakash* (1830 A.D.) of Rattan Singh Bhangu. Ever since the demise of Guru Gobind Singh, for almost ninety years, the Sikhs struggled and passed through the Valley of Death to emerge into a sovereign nation, implicitly believing that these are the very words from the mouth of the Guru and till 1948 this litany has been 'faithfully repeated, morning and evening, by faithful Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh during all kinds of ups and downs in their political fortunes.

It was in 1949, at the bidding of late Sardar Patel, that

the Nagoke Congressite Sikhs, when they captured the control of the Sikh historical shrines in the Punjab, issued an *ukase* discontinuing chanting of this litany in the gurdwaras under official control but this interregnum was very short lived: This litany continues to be chanted in all free Sikh congregations throughout the world, notwithstanding the intellectual onslaught, mounted in recent years, against it, for whatever reasons or motives. It was Guru Amar Dass who established 22 dioceses of the Sikh Church, and Bhai Santokh Singh in his *Sri Gurpartap Suraj Granth* tells us that the twenty two dioceses were established to create exact parallelism between the Sikh church and the 22 provinces of the Mughal Empire. In the *Bhagat Ratnavali*, Bhai Mani Singh, a contemporary and close disciple of Guru Gobind Singh, in his exegesis of the eleventh Ode of Bhai Gurdas tells us as follows:

"Brothers Jaita, Sigara and Ganga Sehgal were brave and fearless soldiers and they presented themselves before Guru Arjan. Guru Arjan bade them to join the entourage of his son, Hargobind, who was to be the successor Guru and who, Guru Arjan said, had been assigned the task by God Almighty, to protect the Sikh congregation through the employment and power of arms and armaments. Hard times were ahead. The new Guru will make conquests that will lead to eventual political sovereignty of the Sikhs, through the sword and will establish the Sikh hegemony of the spiritual world through the power of the divine Word."

When in 1710 the political sovereignty of the Sikh nation was first proclaimed by Banda Singh Bahadur the official State-seal bore the following legend in strict compliance with this exegesis in the *Bhagat Ratnavali* :

Sikhi zad bar har du alam tegh-i-Nanak Sahib ast.

ਸਿਖੀ ਜਦ ਬਰ ਹਰ ਦੁ ਆਲਮ ਤੇਗ-ਏ-ਨਾਨਕ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਅਸਤ

which means that the 'Sikh people stake their claim to the political and spiritual sovereignty, both, such being the original doctrine of Nanak.'

The poet Kankan, who was contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh, tells us that a falcon of Emperor Shah Jehan fell into the hands of some Sikh hunters of Guru Hargobind (1595-1664 A.D.), but they refused to surrender it to the minions of the Emperor and made the following utterances:

"You keep on threatening us to return immediately the falcon of the Emperor. We refuse to do so and we would have you know, that what to speak of this falcon, our ultimate objective is to snatch the regal crown from over the head of your Emperor who usurps the sovereignty of the people,

Tusi baaj hi baaj pukaarde ho,
asi taj tuhadara kahaunde han.

ਤੁਸੀਂ ਬਾਜ ਹੀ ਬਾਜ ਪੁਕਾਰਦੇ ਹੋ,
ਅਸੀਂ ਤਾਜ ਤੁਹਾਡਾ ਕਹਾਉਂਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

It was Guru Tegh Bahadur, the father of Guru Gobind Singh, who issued the famous *hukamnama* for all-out rebellion against the Mughal Imperial tyranny calling upon the Sikhs, 'not to salute a Mughal government official and never to invite him to sit on the head-side of a cot'.

In obedience to this *hukamnama* of Guru Tegh Bahadur, hundreds of Sikhs in the decades to come, laid down their lives willingly by refusing to salute the men in governmental authority and by declining to make gestures of submission to the rulers. These are the martyrs whom we remember and revere in our every day prayers since the last 200 years. Guru Gobind Singh enjoined upon the Sikhs to insist on wearing unlicensed arms, the *kirpan* which is the right symbol of a free sovereign man and in the *Prachin Panth Prakash*, it is said of a Sikh that :

"He does not own allegiance to any earthly lord. He is either a sovereign man or a rebel."

Is this an evidence of a Sikh doctrine which lays down that aspiration for political power and political activity as such is alien to Sikhism and hostile to the true spirit of the Sikh people. Do some of our new intellectuals want us to apostatize

to join some new sect of pseudo-Sikhism based on some new doctrine of religion which was neither preached by the Sikh Gurus nor practised by the Sikh people during the last three centuries and more? If that is their intention, let them come out openly with it instead of indulging in tendentious propaganda. It is highly improper, if not mean also to try to deviate Sikhs from a position and interpretation of their religion which has received the universal assent of the Sikh Gurus, the Sikh theologians and the Sikh people during the past centuries of Sikh history.

Now, let us come to the point as to whether it is advisable for the Sikhs to demand the type of protection and status embodied in the demand for Sikh Homeland. The argument is frequently advanced that the spirit of the Sikh people urges them on to expand while the demand for Sikh Homeland seeks to shrivel and confine them into a small area in the north of India. This is wholly misconceived. The demand for Sikh Homeland neither envisages that all the Sikhs of the world should pack up their bags and baggage to come back to settle in the Sikh Homeland nor does it follow that the establishment of the Sikh Homeland will oblige them to do so. The Sikh Homeland shall be an integral part of India and those who have their homes and hearths in the Sikh Homeland shall be as good citizens of India as those residents in other parts of India, entitled to the same rights, privileges and protection to which any non-Sikh citizen of India is entitled. The establishment of Sikh Homeland will not entail or place any restriction on the urge of Sikhs to move about or reside in any part of the world, just as they may do now. Those who conjure up such objections or fears in the minds of the Sikhs are either ignorant or something worse.

It is urged sometimes by opponents of Sikh politics that the demand for Sikh Homeland is hostile to the public policy of national integration and that for this reason the demand should be eschewed in the larger national interests. This objection is also wholly misconceived if not mischievous also.

Firstly, this national integration, the other face of which is the Jana Sangh slogan, 'Indianization of every Indian citizen' in essence is not what it seems on the surface and it is the job of politicians to find this truth out and to formulate programmes accordingly. National integration has an implicit message of Hindu Primacy conveyed to the minorities in a variety of ways among which the most prominent are linguistic, historiographic and religious. Linguistically, the minorities are required to accept Sanskrit-based Hindi and Devnagri alphabet as the national characteristics of a true progressive Indian outlook. On the plane of history it demands denigration of historical importance of minorities based on an emphasis on the central role of Hindus in Indian history. In religion, it demands a favourable treatment, at official level, of the operative ideas and ceremonies of Hinduism. The ultimate intent of national integration, as it is implemented today, is the Hindunisation of all minorities - religious, cultural and ethnical groups in India.

Such an integration is ultimately intended to suck back the Sikhs into the omnivorous belly of the Hindu society from which there is no return and if this trend succeeds in its ultimate aims, Sikhism as a distinct religion will become a thing of the past and Sikh society and the Khalsa shall disintegrate finally. This Hindu polity of universal absorption has hoary sanctions, and in the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya or Chanakya, to commemorate whom the Diplomatic Enclave of New Delhi is called, *Chanakyapuri*; it is called, *matsyanyaya* the 'Fish-justice' the moral right of the bigger fishy eat up the smaller one, and the duty of the smaller fish to submit willingly to be gobbled up. This doctrine would fix the Sikh destiny as manure sacrifice and transition.

This would be not only a tragedy for the mankind as a whole, for Sikhism and Sikh society have been accepted as a valuable element of contribution to the world culture, but this would be a tragedy for India and the Hindu society also, a point the present-day myopic politicians of India fail to see. Back of Sikh society, behind their energy, their history-

making potency, and their productive capacity, there is something as powerful as it is insubstantial, it is a set of ideas, attitudes and convictions and the confidence that these ideas are viable. The Sikhs, if they are driven to the conclusion by the machinations of the present-day rulers of India and by political stupidity of a class of a Sikh intellectuals, that their collectivity and the ideas and beliefs that have sustained it are no longer viable and relevant to the present situation they will erupt before fading away. They will not become a part and parcel of the Hindu Society as some short-sighted Hindu politicians seem to believe. They will become accretions to anti-social gangs of smugglers, women-lifters, highway men, Naxalites and terrorists as those who have studied the pulsations of Sikh society in recent times know fully well. Then the deposit of Sikhism and the Sikh way of life, the panoply of history-making power will be as nothing and the darkness will gather and the north of India shall fall a prey to dark anti-social force, the ultimate impact of which on the history of India and this region of the world, nobody can foretell. The future develops mysteriously, secretly and unfolds itself silently without fore-caution and there will appear no warning headlines in the morning editions of favourite newspapers of these obstreperous Sikh intellectuals and over-clever rulers of India before such a catastrophe befalls them.

In Guatemala and southern Mexico, one can observe the Indians who are, without doubt, the lineal descendants of those who created the Mayan civilization. Today, they are a humble people not asking much of themselves or of the world and not getting much. They have been reduced to a state of peonage and with this they are content. A light has gone out. In Malaysia of today there are Sikh citizens who are descendants of those who submitted to the cruel and excruciating removal of their scalps by the executioner rather than part with their sacred *keshas*, yet these are the Malaysian young Sikh men who would, at a pinch embrace Islam so as to marry a young Muslim co-ed, since the Constitution of their country does not permit the marriage of a Muslim girl with a non-Muslim citizen. In the streets of Southampton of the

United Kingdom you may observe the clean-shaven and cigarette-smoking descendants of those Sikhs who once challenged the might of the growing British Imperial power on the banks of Sutlej and had almost defeated it if only they had not been betrayed by their traitor generals and traitor civil government. The British Empire, the Industrial Revolution of Europe and also the history of world in the 19th and 20th centuries were at crossroads and these Sikhs had the powers of control. Now, their modern descendants of the considerable Sikh colony in the United Kingdom, who have shaved themselves and converted themselves into jolly good fellows in the beer pubs of that great country, might be full of energy that enables them to earn good money and they might have acquired a good material standard of life, good food, smart clothes and habits of generous hospitality and they might build magnificent Sikh temples wherein offerings of thousands of Pounds a day are made and in which *Gurdwaras* Queen's peace is frequently disturbed on issues of election of presidents and secretaries of these Sikh temples. But these modern "Sikhs" who have dropped out, so to speak, have lost, forever, the history-making potency that their forefathers possessed and no matter how affluent and influential they become as a group in the United Kingdom, they shall never be able to make any significant contribution to the high and composite culture of the British race. They are doomed to remain 'Blackies' and 'Niggers', 'South Asian' and 'Hindus' and they shall never be Sikhs, as conceived by Guru Nanak and as fashioned by Guru Gobind Singh, unless they unreservedly and penitently return to the original Institute of the Khalsa.

The cohesiveness of a society, the determination of a large number of people to live together, to work together, to aspire together, is a fairly mysterious thing and we yet do not know what makes it happen.

If the Khalsa is made to pull apart, as the neo-Hindu politicians through purposeful machinations and the naive Sikh intellectuals through cussedness and lack of deeper

understanding of things seem bent upon doing, will anyone know how to go about repairing it? Gurus do not descend on the earth every decade. Who can say what the disintegration of the Khalsa will cost the Hindus society and India in the long run!

The demand for Sikh Homeland is a way out of the conditions of rootlessness and individual irresponsibility into which Sikhs are being reduced through atomization of the Khalsa and secularization in a free India, unless they are extricated from this morass through political arrangements that can enable them to salvage their collective identity, they might become a danger to others, in desperate efforts to find meaning, and purpose for themselves, through whatever comes to hand, communism, nihilism, bizarre religious or far-out protest movements. Those who are in intimate touch with the social fermentation in the Indian Punjab of today know too well that this is what is already happening. One has simply to examine the lists of cardholders of the Communist Party, the bio-data of liquidated Naxalite young men, the leading lights of protest movements and strike and *hartals* in every sphere of social, political and governmental life of the State and also the number of those who daily swell the pseudo-religious churches of *nirankaris*, *radhasoamis* and self styled saints to realize that the hazards are real. Those who shut their eyes to this danger do so either through irrational animosity towards Sikhism and the Sikh people or through gross ignorance. This explains the entire gamut of opposition and objections to the demand for Sikh Homeland. The good souls who argue that because in the Sikh scripture it is stated at numerous places, that a man of religion hankers neither after worldly power nor after personal redemption, *raj na chahun mukt na chahun* "ਰਾਜ ਨ ਚਾਹਉ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਚਾਹਉ" (ਪੰਨਾ 534) and so on, do not understand that these are not injunctions, or commandments of Sikhism nor statements of doctrine, but merely clues to techniques for mood-inducement, the roots of which techniques go to the ancient yoga texts. To interpret a

sacred scripture is not a job which every man who happens to be a graduate from a University, a brave General or a successful lawyer can properly undertake. There are different levels of meanings of a scripture and only those who have spent a life-time on the subject, with a proper background and training, are competent to interpret them. Dante in his *convivio* lists four levels of meanings in accordance with which scriptures ought to be understood and expounded and the modern philosophers of Semantics endorse it, in substance. Literal and dictionary meanings constitute the lowest of these levels. Amongst Sikhs, however, an impression seems to be prevalent that not only every man may interpret the Guru Granth and the inner meanings and the true doctrines of Sikhism but that everyone's interpretation must be deemed as valid as that of any other. This would seem to be the Sikh variation of 'equality, liberty; fraternity'. This type of immaturity neither exists nor is tolerated in any other religious community of the world and it has never been so permitted in the past by any mature culture group.

Martin Luther wrote indefatigably on a vast variety of subjects and the Weimer Edition of his complete works runs to ninety volumes. Martin Luther is father and fountain head of the trends of religious thoughts and moods than have given birth to modern industrialized, powerful Western- Europe. He may be said to have summed up his life work and his final view on the subject of religion, in the famous Note found in his scattered papers after his death. This Note, scribbled in pencil on a stray piece of paper, runs as follows :

"No one can understand Virgil's *Bucolics* unless he has been a headmaster for five years : no one can understand the letters of Cicero unless he has lived and moved in great Commonwealth for 25 years. Let no one think he tasted enough of the Holy Scripture unless he has ruled the congregation with prophets like Elijah an Elisha, John the Baptist, Christ and the Apostles. We are beggars, that is true."

To interpret and to exegetise the Sikh scripture and to lay there, the meaning and true contours of the values of Sikh

Society is not every man's meat. Those who insist on creating confusion and obfuscation in the doctrines and principles of Sikhism and the postulates of Sikh society are doing the greatest possible harm not only to the Sikhs but also the world community which is a legitimate heir to what Sikhism and the Sikh society has to offer by way of its peculiar contribution to the universal world-culture, which is now in the process of emerging.

That the Khalsa is a State is the earliest clear idea that has emerged in Sikh epiphany and that has been accepted as the true Sikh postulate for the last three hundred years. This was much before Hegel stated that only those people can come under our notice which form a State. Hegel is correct, because his statement reflects the familiar distinction between History and pre-History : only those people which have succeeded in organizing their society in some degree cease to be primitive savages and enter into History. That sovereignty is a *sui generis* characteristic of the Khalsa, that may be suppressed by other or compromised by community's individuals but which cannot be extinguished or proscribed is equally well established. Protest against injustice, rebellion against and resistance to despotism, including the right of tyrannicide is embodied in the basic constitution of the Khalsa. To ask the Sikhs now to degenerate into a herd of unquestioning camp-followers and submissive slaves is simply preposterous. No amount of spurious arguments or tendentious write-ups can change this basic position.

It is being argued that since the Sikhs have made a mess of arts and practices of Government in the Punjab recently, it is a conclusive argument against any aspiration by the Sikhs to acquire and exercise political power. It is significant that this argument is advanced by those who claim to be for the Sikhs as well as by those who make no secret of their antipathy and political hostility towards the Sikhs. Who is the master mind and who is the tool in this game is anybody's guess. Anyhow, this is a strange type of logic. Nobody is more

painfully aware than the writer of these lines as to how the Sikhs have mismanaged their political affairs in recent years. But is this state of affairs peculiar to the Sikhs alone in India? Throughout the country there has been a general decline in norms and standards of political and personal conduct. The third-rater, the bully and the thug are having it their own way and the decent and the scrupulous have been systematically elbowed out of the political arena of the country everywhere and at all levels. Processes of democracy have been subverted to serve the ends of self-aggrandizement, and dishonesty and corruption is the order of the day. True, the Sikhs are somewhat crude and unsophisticated in perversion of the political game, but that also makes them less vicious and dangerous to the interest of the country and the nation. Though one could sympathize with the argument that the Sikhs who refuse to bifurcate politics from religion ought to have known and done better, this is no argument to shunt the Sikhs out of the main-stream of the Indian history by asking them to eschew political activity and aspiration for being at decision-making levels of the politics of their country. Such an argument can be advanced only by those who desire, above all things to see that the Sikh religion and the Sikh society are consigned to the limbo of the past. Surely, this cannot be the aim of any Sikh intellectual, if he is a Sikh at all whether he has made a mark in his worldly profession, is an adept in *Nam simran* or is a master of the esoteric science of psychoanalysis.

What counts in history is continuity and fecundity. The Sikhs must multiply and expand and they must remain, at all costs, in the vanguard of political activity or they must squeeze, deliquence and be smashed and squashed up. There is no third alternative. There is a pathological human urge to crush those who are weak, particularly those who once were not so and thus by renouncing or failure in the game of politics the Sikhs expose themselves to double jeopardy, not mere extinction but ignoble extinction. The Guru has bidden the

Sikhs never to listen to such dark evil counsels. Guru Gobind Singh, himself, has told us that 'a man forbidden to wear unlicensed arms and reduced to a shorn slave in appearance, is verily like a sheep liable to be led to the slaughter house by whosoever may wish to do so.'

*Bina sastra kesam naru bhed jano,
kidhu kan te ko pakar le sidhaano.*

ਬਿਨਾ ਸਾਸਤਰਾ ਕੇਸਮ ਨਾਰੂ ਭੇਦ ਜਾਨੈ।
ਕਿਧੁ ਕਾਨ ਤੇ ਕੋ ਪਕਾਰ ਲੇ ਸਿਧਾਨੈ।

Are the followers of this Guru Gobind Singh now ready to accept the advice and exhortations of those who tell us that political power vitiates human soul and that it is forbidden to a Sikh to engage in political activity or those who tell us that some Freud or Jung has said such and such thing about anatomy of power-politics? Then Guru Gobind Singh warns us that he who would relinquish his firm grip on the hilt of the sword must prepare his fleshy neck to receive the sharp edge of a sword in the hands of another.'

ਖੜਗ ਕਥਿ ਜਨ ਤਜਿਓ ਖੜਿਗ ਧਰਾ ਸੈਹੀਓ ॥

Are the followers of this Guru Gobind Singh to be enamoured by the siren calls of those who tell us as our Chandigarh friend does in his paper back, that since, during the British days many Sikhs engaged themselves in *naam-simran* while undergoing life-imprisonments in the dark dungeons of foreign rulers in distant parts of India and Andaman Island, therefore, a state of slavery and subjugation must be deemed as highly conducive to the practice of true Sikh religion?

Let the Sikhs make no mistake about it that unless they wake up and delve deep into their own souls to rediscover the direction which the Guru gave them, they are facing the mortal danger of being pushed out of the main-stream of History and of eventual extinction. This 'national integration', this talk of 'secularism' in which politics is supposed to be freed and disassociated from religion, originate from those

who have now usurped the political strings of the destiny of India. They have brazen-facedly adopted all the tactics of Tammany Hall bosses to push out decent element out of the political life by manufacturing wholesale bogus memberships in their own organizations and engineering bogus voting at public elections. Thus they have managed to maintain a fraudulent facade of democracy, reduced politics to a filthy game which nobody wishing to keep his hands clean can play and have turned public life into an arena infested by hoodlums, hooligans and other undesirable elements. Their self-interest is their only concern. People have been made to live from day to day on false hopes created by empty slogans and empty promises. The little prosperity brought about by developmental progress has been misappropriated by crooked politicians, briberous bureaucracy, unscrupulous industrialist and black-marketing businessman. They have brought about total eclipse of moral values in all sphere of life. This dishonest and unpatriotic group are living in vulgar indulgence and ostentation. These people can be no guides, for us, the Sikhs, and the only true Guide for us is the Guru who can help us here and redeem us hereafter. Bishop Berkeley is right in saying that, "he who hath not meditated upon God the human mind and the summum bonum may make a thriving earth worm but a sorry statesman."

This calamity to India and to our nation must be staved off. This can be done, in theory, by a good, efficient and honest government manned by competent persons of unquestionable character in whom the people can repose their confidence. It is in this context that the Sikhs have to consider as to what their duty towards themselves, towards the Guru, towards the country and the nation is. Not by following the string leads of these politicians can the Sikhs do any good to themselves or to the country. Not by giving up political activity and aspirations to political power can they discharge the duty which the Guru and History have placed on their shoulders. This duty was well perceived by General Barker, the

Commander-in-chief of the East India Army, when on the 19th August, 1771 he wrote to Sirdar Jhanda Singh Bhangi that, "It is clear that as long as the Khalsa is on the watch no one can march upon Hindustan." This danger of "march upon Hindustan " has been there since the dawn of history and the lapse of two centuries since General Barker wrote to the Sikh Sirdar, this danger has assumed the form of a double threat of military invasion as well as the more disastrous ideological invasion such as can destroy the very soul of India.

This makes the duty of the Sikhs much more complex and onerous. Their duty, therefore, is firstly to carve out and establish for themselves a congenial habitat and *milieu* where in the guiding impulse and postulates of the Sikh society freely operate and fructify. Their second task is to organize and equip themselves as to play the vital role of being a cultural and political bridge between the Aryan India and the Semitic western Asia. India is, by nature and historical circumstances now destined to become a great nation and a great power on the material and cultural planes, both. Unless the Sikhs play their part properly and well they shall be guilty of treason towards India and the Indian people, towards History and towards mankind. Above all they shall have betrayed the task entrusted to them by the Sikh Gurus, that of creating a just, forward-looking equalitarian and plural society wherein the spiritual values of mutual tolerance, cooperation and understanding can prosper, and thus to play a vital role such as truly behoves and befits them.

The demand for Sikh Homeland arises out of this context and it certainly is not something conceived by this individual politician or that and harped on by those who are supposed not to understand either the tenets of Sikh religion or the spirit of Sikh ethos.

In the present age, when all political power has devolved upon the people, to try to renounce it would be the greatest act of folly on the part of the Sikhs in their collectivity. Those who would aspire to and legitimately acquire this political

power at the decision making levels shall become the elect and the chosen people and those who renounce or edge away from it shall become the defeated and the vanquished ones. *Vae Victis* is a Roman piece of wisdom which means, 'woe to the vanquished.' Do some of our Sikh intellectuals wish the Sikhs to have the fate of the vanquished and do these intellectuals know what this fate is, and has been throughout the ages? The vanquished are the dust under the feet of the conqueror and the dirt on his shoes. The vanquished are the hewers of wood and the drawers of water. Is the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh, the revered Khalsa of the Eternal God, *Sat Sri Akalpurkh ji ka khalsaji sahib*, to be reduced to this condition? Have these Sikhs read as to what happened to the women, children, treasures of art and culture of the Russians subjected to German invasion during the last World War? Have they read the accounts and Diaries now published by some women who were caught up in Berlin when Russians occupied it in 1945? Do they know what happened to the Sikh women, the Sikh sacred heirlooms when the Punjab was invaded by the soldiery of U.P. in 1845? Every virgin and every women on the road leading to Lahore was raped and degraded by this mercenary Uttar Pradesh, soldiery, purbias, as we called them and it was to avenge this, mainly, that the Sikhs joined hands with the British during the Mutiny of 1857. In the Indo-Pakistan conflict of 1965, it is now known that but for the obduracy of a certain Sikh General it had almost been decided to abandon the entire Punjab west of Ambala to the invading Pakistani tanks. Just for a week or ten days of occupation of the Sikh Homeland by the soldiers of Marshal Ayub, and not a single Sikh virgin or a single Sikh rupee or a single Sikh sacred spot would have retained its purity or dignity. And the Sikh world its Generals, barristers and psychoanalysts notwithstanding, would have been enveloped by darkness and decay for fifty years at least it not forever. Guru Nanak has warned that 'when the focii of holiness, the spots of sanctity and the areas of pride of a people are violated,

desecrated and degraded, then the people sink down into despairing gloom and state of abject surrender'.

Thanist jag bhrast hoe dubta iv jag.

ਥਾਨਸਟ ਜਗ ਭਰਿਸਟ ਹੋਏ ਫੂਬਤਾ ਇਵ ਜਗੁ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 662)

Will the Sikhs not wake up to prepare themselves for such an eventuality which may befall them one fine morning when they wake up from under their greasy quilts after a long evening booze? No amount of fine exegesis of the Sikh scripture made by our intellectuals will come to the rescue of the Sikhs when such a fate overtakes them. No amount of joined supplicatory hands or muttering the name of God will save them from total degradation and humiliation. But if they wake up in time, turn their faces towards the Guru, and salvage their political personality in a constitutionally established Sikh Homeland within the Union of India there is every prospect of such a fate to the Sikhs and shame to India being averted.

Ananda Coomarswamy in his *Essays in National Idealism* (1921) wrote :

We want our India for ourselves, because we believe each nation has its own part to play in the long tale of human progress and nations which are not free to develop their individuality and character are also unable to make the contribution to the sum of human culture which the world has a right to expect of them.

This is the essence of the central argument for creation of the Sikh Homeland.

That when political power came to the Sikhs in the 19th century and again, far a few years in an attenuated form, in the 20th century in the shape of Akali ministry led from the nose by a theanthropic saint, it gave rise to gross abuses deleterious for the purity of Sikh doctrine and the dignity of the Sikh image is not an argument against political power, but is merely an acknowledgement of a basic human fragility. "Power corrupts and absolute power, corrupts absolutely" is

a truth not originally discovered by Lord Acton, Kautilya, the high priest of political power in his Arthashastra, tells us that, 'power invariably tends to pervert human mind' *balam hi cittam vakroti*. Kautilya does not draw the inference that political activity and power must be renounced as *per se evil*; he expounds detailed rules how to acquire political power and then cling to it at all costs so that the ethical values and the Social Order in which they inhere may be duly protected. The great Sankaracharya in his *Opadesik-pancika* announces that the fundamental disease of human body is the hunger' *kshudarogam*, but he does not proceed to recommend fast-unto-death as the remedy. He enjoins strict and scientific regulation of food, *pratidinam bhikshosdham bhujyatam*.

Why must the Sikhs be such simpletons as to recommend for themselves renunciation of political power, against all canons of commonsense, against all lessons of History, against the historical experience of the Sikh community, against the traditions set by their ancestors and against the teachings of the Guru?

Sikhs must want to live as all living things do, they cannot be asked to agree to die.

Sikh society, the Khalsa, is an organic living society with a unique character; it asks to be accepted as equal because it is unique, as each individual is unique.

Sir Lapel Griffien, when he wrote the Life of Ranjit Singh in the year 1840, said of the political talent of the Sikhs that:

To the Brahmins (Hindus) and the Mohammendars (Muslims) alone did the hereditary talent of Government (understanding of politics) belong against the cultured intelligence of those races, what had the poor Sikh cultivator, stupid as his own buffaloes, to oppose? Not to him the triumphs of diplomacy and the conflict to quick intellects in the atmosphere of a court. He could do no more than plough straight and fight. In the intellectual competition with Brahmins

and Mohammedans, he was as a cart horse pitted against thoroughbreds.

In 1947, H. V. Hodson, the Constitutional Adviser to Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India was constrained to observe in his publication, *The Great Divide*, that,

'Time and again the powers that were in the Central Government of India complained of political incompetence of the Sikhs.'

As if being a herd of incompetent stupid buffaloes in politics was not enough of us, we are now throwing up a class of pseudo-intellectuals who are engaged in preaching, day and night, that Sikhism is a church of worship only that *Raj karega Khalsa* is a fabricated anti-Sikh litany and that the demand for Sikh Homeland is made by half-wits and self-seeking politicians.

May the Rider of the Blue Horse now Himself redeem the promise he had made of coming to the aid and rescue of the Khalsa whenever grave danger threatens it.

WHO KILLED GURU TEGH BAHADUR ?*

1. In the Sikh contemporary records of the highest credibility and in the consistent Sikh tradition and chronicles as well as in the Sikh group-memory, Aurangzeb is shown, as having personally ordered the public execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur at Delhi on the 11th November, 1675. The execution was ordered by the Emperor after a number of interviews with the Guru in which the fundamental principles of the Mughal state-policy came under discussion, as to (1) whether the Ultimate Truth could be encased in verbal formulae, (2) whether the creed-formula of Islam did so encase it justifying its claim to being the final and exclusive deposit of Truth (3) whether this claim could be and should be imposed through terror and temptations, *ash-shara' tahtut-saif* and (4) whether a totalitarian, altogether dissent-free society was divinely predetermined as the Will of God. To all these profound and rootal questions, the reply of the Guru is recorded as having been in the negative and consequently, Aurangzeb clinched the issue by formally inviting the Guru to embrace Islam. This the Guru declined, thus attracting the penalty of death according to the basic state laws of Islam *ama alaqaatl wa ama al-Islam*.

2. These historically momentous occurrences, the greatest possible significance and relevance to human situation—more so today than ever before—took place when Guru Gobind Singh, the son of the martyr Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur, was of nine years of age, and throughout these occurrences, the

* TSR, January, 1976

Guru's House was in constant and uninterrupted touch, through carefully arranged intelligence and communications, with Guru Tegh Bahadur and what passed on at Delhi.

3. All this is described and consistently recorded in detail in the Sikh chronicles, as it is embedded in the Sikh group-memory.

4. Guru Gobind Singh himself, about whose altogether reliable testimony and credibility, no reasonable doubts can be raised, tells us in *Bachittra Natak* (1686), that his father.

Broke the pitcher of his mortal,
frame on the head of the Delhi emperor

ਠੀਕਰਿ ਫੇਰਿ ਦਿਲੀਸਿ ਸਿਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਪੁਰ ਕੀਯਾ ਧਯਾਨੁ ॥ (ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ)

-not "on the head" of the Mughal State or that of the ruling race, the 'Turks' but 'on the head of Aurangzeb himself. Those who are conversant with Hindi-Punjabi idiom well understand that Guru Gobind Singh's expression *thikar phor dilis sir* clearly implies that it was Aurangzeb who personally, not through an order issued through official channels from a distant place, had Guru Tegh Bahadur executed at Delhi where he was present then on the 11th November, 1675. Guru Gobind Singh further records that the immediate cause of his father's martyrdom arose out of Guru Tegh Bahadur having directly and personally espoused and taken up the cause of the Hindu religion then placed under gradual interdiction by Aurangzeb and that the confrontation between the Guru and the Emperor did not involve, direct Sikh cause, *tilak janju rakha prabhutaka*. We are further told in the *Bachittar natak* that the legal issue of Islamic jurisprudence was clinched against the Guru when he flatly declined to display a miracle such as would support his implied claim to independent prophethood, on the ground that miracle-working was undignified for a man of religion *natak chetak karat kukaja prabhu logan kau avat laja*.

Bhai Santokh Singh, *Mahakavi*, in his *Guru pratap Suraj Prakath* (1846) clearly tells us that *adham naurange karan kina*

"it was the unspeakably evil Aurangzeb who had Guru Tegh Bahadur executed."

5. During the last few decades, however, a new discipline called, 'historical research' has swept over India, giving its contemporary historians access to sources of information hitherto not available, such as many sided manuscript-material, techniques of inter-disciplinary comparative studies such as archaeology, inscriptional matter, numismatic evidence and C-14 tests. This has vastly extended the frontiers of and illuminated historical knowledge, cleared it of its obscurantist cobwebs, and has furnished scholars with techniques and insights of interpretational methods that were not generally available earlier and that enable them to make historical studies more objectively and scientifically.

6. But, as is not uncommon, new techniques and new tools bring in new pitfalls, those of inadequacy of full understanding of their true significance and scope, and prejudices and biases born of erroneous assumptions, and last but not the least, lopsided partisanship resulting from absence of totality of vision. The recent restructuring of Sikh history, in particular, has suffered most grievously in recent times at the hands of non-Sikh and Sikh historians both. Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar, for instance, forgetting altogether that the true source-material of Sikh history lies deposited in Sikh writings, sacred and secular, preserved in the Gurmukhi script and north-Indian vernaculars of both of which he was blissfully ignorant, as he was innocent of any comprehension of the basic rule of interpretation that the only valid interpretation is the auto-interpretation to which hetero-interpretation is no more than impudence, has gone on a spree in his writings on Aurangzeb by speaking of the Sikh prophets and personalities as if they are criminal probationers before Sarkar, the warden-magistrate. He speaks of the 'corruption of the original, Sikh doctrine' and 'degradation' of its Spirituality by Guru Hargobind and Guru Gobind Singh in particular and severely reprimands them for hiring services of professional Pathan mercenaries for body-

guard and self-defence purposes, without realising that Guru Hargobind put on the sword belt and recruited a body-guard platoon as specifically asked by his father Guru Arjan, and Guru Gobind Singh, in everything he did, including the inauguration of the Khalsa, swore by Guru Nanak. Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar, should have realised that the ten Sikh Gurus, one after the other were to be deemed as more reliable authorities on what the true implications of the original spiritual teachings of Guru Nanak are, and if they resorted to political activities and took cognizance of the power-game around them it must have been because such were the true teachings of Guru Nanak, and that to judge Sikhism and its historical evaluation by standards of vague Jain and Hindu teachings and prejudices about *ahimsa* and the Hindu imperative of utter separation of this world from the next, is just hetero-interpretation, like a goldsmith trying to test the excellence of a rose-flower, by rubbing it against his touchstone. No, did Sarkar in his self-assurance, pause to take due note of the fact that in 17th and 18th century India, professional mercenaries soldiers were an integral part of the political activity and participation in the power-game, there being no moral or spiritual issues involved. Accepted as a trend-setter in relation to Sikh history, Sarkar has given rise and lent respectability to certain extremely stupid guidelines for his contemporary historiographers that have played havoc not only in the recently reconstructed Sikh history but have thrown the Sikh writers and teachers of History altogether off their balance.

7. These guidelines, accepted as axiomatic, have just to be stated precisely to show their extremely pernicious character and their impermissibility in objective and scientific historiography. Some of these 'guidelines', or more correctly, gross prejudices are these: (a) Almost exclusively, the reliable material about Sikh history is to be found in the contemporary Persian records, (b) Sikh records in Gurmukhi script and Sikh racial memory, consistent and continuous, are irrelevant and

unreliable, to be noted, if at all, as secondary corroborative and supplemental material. (c) Sikh prophets, the Gurus, are to be estimated just as ordinary citizens of the Mughal empire whose words and deeds are to be tested and evaluated on the scale of contemporary official values and judgements. (d) Sikhism is not an autonomous prophetic world-religion, distinguishable from the Hindu religious tradition and, therefore, it is legitimate to judge and evaluate it under Hindu category and norms of judgement and thus to condemn and approve of it, finally and conclusively. (e) The writings of 17th and early 18th century European adventurers are to be taken as most reliable and conclusive even when they are demonstrably self-stultifying.

8. It is in this grotesque frame-work that the new Sikh history is being written by many of the non-Sikh and Sikh historiographers as a result of which the entire foundation-work of Sikhism and the Sikh history is being eroded into, and unless this trend is checked it cannot but have disastrous consequences for Sikhism and the Sikhs.

9. It is Sarkar who is, more than anybody else singly, responsible for boosting up Persian records of Muslim historiographers, as the unerring sources of the historical fact. Sarkar's prejudice in this respect almost parallels the claim made about the Mahabharata, that, 'what is there in the world, it is there in this book also, and if it is not here, it is not there too, *yad ihfisti tad anyatra yanne ihfisti na tat kvacit*

10. Aurangzeb and Guru Tegh Bahadur are inextricably bound up together in history. There are three or four major Persian records relating to this period. Aurangzeb ascended the Mughal throne in August, 1658 and died in 1707. After a rule of ten years, he felt that he had completely mastered his dominions as the undisputed ruler of the country and he felt justified in pursuing an all-out policy of converting India into an orthodox Sunni Muslim state, and to "bring the lives of the people into closer accord with the teachings of Islam" (Edwards and Garret, *Mughal Rule in India*, Delhi, 1956, P.114).

In the same year he forbade writing of all history, so that, in the darkness of this total news blackout, he could systematically and ruthlessly root out Hinduism and the Hindu way of life as other forms of dissidence, such as Sikhism and non-Sunni Islam. In 1669 he ordered demolition of all places of worship of non-Muslims and closure of their teaching seminaries. In 1675, he had Guru Tegh Bahadur, who had formally assumed the responsibilities of protecting Hinduism, publicly executed at Delhi. In 1679 he re-imposed the *oppressive jzieh* on Hindus with the result as Manucci tells us (*Storia de Mogor*, p.11. 234), that "many Hindus who were unable to pay turned Mohammadans to obtain relief from the insults of the collectors." In 1704 he ordered killing or capture of Guru Gobind Singh and destruction and diaspora of the Khalsa. In 1707 he died, leaving behind, not a monolithic, dissent-free Sunni India, but a Mughal empire shaken in its very roots, a fissirostral government and a resurgent Maratha Hinduism as well as the Khalsa, "a deadly coiled snake in the striking posture, *Pecideh mar*, as Guru Gobind Singh referred to it in his *Zafarnameh*.

11. Of this pregnantly black period of Indian history, the first contemporary Persian record, that we have is that of Mirza Mohd. Kazim, the official history writer of Aurangzeb who recorded events of the first ten years of his reign. It makes no mention whatsoever of the public execution of the world famous *Sufi saint*, Sarmad, whom Aurangzeb got murdered during the first year of his reign for possessing and expressing religious views contrary to those of the fanatical Aurangzeb. Then, when Aurangzeb totally banned all history writing, someone secretly prepared folios, called *Munta-hab-ul-lubab*, under the pseudonym, Khafi Khan, which covers the period, almost upto the demise of Aurangzeb, and in this voluminous record also, there is neither any mention of Sarmad's execution, nor of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, although Khafi Khan thought it important enough to record that during those days some cattle grazing boys, while playing

at the game of *King and Subjects*, actually strangled a playmate to death. After the passing away of Aurangzeb, during the reign of Shah Alam-1 (1710) one Must'ad Khan, in his *Ma'asar-i-Alamgiri*, recorded the history of 40 years of Aurangzeb's reign from 1669 to 1707 and in this document also there is no mention of Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom or of Sarmad's execution. One Munshi Ghulam Hussain Khan wrote his *Sayyar-ul-matakhari*n in which he recorded a general history of India of 1702-1786, describing the reigns of the last seven emperors of India and an account of the progress of the English in Bengal. We do not know who this Ghulam Hussain was, when he actually wrote his book, vaguely believed to have been written round about 1785, though there is no chronogrammatical support available to this guess. However, any original or otherwise authentic manuscript of this book is not there and it is not known under what circumstances he wrote it, the only certain thing about it being that it was first published in 1897. This Persian record makes a mention of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur, but not much reliability can be placed on the author's statements as they are demonstrably sketchy, grounded in bazar stories current long after the events. About Guru Tegh Bahadur, he tells us that (1) the Guru was ordered to be arrested by Aurangzeb from Hasan Abdal Camp on receiving news reports that the Guru was highly regarded by the public and attracted large numbers of people wherever he went that (2) in fact all the men in the entourage of the Guru, from time to time, were godly, peace-loving people, unarmed and with no hostile intentions towards the state, that (3) the Governor of Lahore arrested the Guru as ordered by the emperor and that (4) the Guru was executed at Lahore with his body cut into four pieces and each piece hung at the four gates of the walls of Lahore, opening towards the four cardinal directions.

12. It is obvious that the writer of these cock and bull stories cannot be regarded any reliable source of information about the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur and also of many

other events that he has presumed to record as history. But since he, presumably, wrote under the suggestion or orders of some British adventurer in India of those days, in the last decades of the 18th century, his book was translated into English by two British subalterns, one Reymond and the other John Briggs, published in London, in the thirties of the nineteenth century.

13. The second of these two gentlemen, Lieutenant John Briggs, for reasons best known to him, said in his "translation" that Munshi-Ghulam Hussain Khan has recorded that Guru Tegh Bahadur was a robber-chief who subsisted on "rapine and plunder," "forsaking all means of honest livelihood" and for this offence he was executed under warrant from the emperor. How this Briggs came to write his own fabrications, as translation from *Siyyar-ul-matakhari*n, through malice, inanity or inebriation most probably all three combined, for malice towards the still-free Sikhs in India was a universal emotion in the minds of the British soldier and inanity and inebriation was their national trait in India, is but clear, but the fact remains that ever since, this account of the martyr, Guru has been accepted as authoritative and historically established by our modern historians, both Indians and non-Indians. Such are the high standards of 'scientific objectivity' that inspire our research scholars of History, particularly, in our Sikh Universities.

14. The latest of these research scholar happens be the Head of the History Department of the Punjabi University at Patiala, Dr. Fauja Singh, who, in his thesis, published in the inaugural issue (1974) of the *Journal of Sikh Studies* sponsored by the Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, has said that, (a) it is Munshi Ghulam Hussain who says in the *Siyyar-ul-matakhari*n that Guru Tegh Bahadur was a robber-chief subsisting on rapine and plunder, and that (b) the Guru was for these crimes, executed at Delhi as a highway robber and political criminal, and finally, that , (c) Aurangzeb is neither

responsible for this execution, nor was he present at Delhi in the winter of 1675.¹

15. Around these self-spun fictions, Dr. Fauja Singh dishes out a pretty exciting story of how Guru Tegh Bahadur was, in reality, a pre-Marxian revolutionary espousing the cause of the exploited land-tillers and attempting to organise a Che Guevera-type premature insurgence in his self-assumed role of a class conscious midwife to revolution, in the course of which activities he was pounced upon and overtaken by the long arm of the law and brought to justice at Delhi by having his head chopped off in the Chandani Chowk. "Long live, Tegh Bahadur" or to be more exact, "Long live, Comrade Tyagmal," for, according to Dr. Fauja Singh, the Gurus' real name, in all likelihood, was Tyagmal and Tegh Bahadur was only his assumed name to the best revolutionary tradition.

16. This is where our University research scholars of history have taken us to, through their allegiance to the precept that all that is true is recorded in the Persian manuscripts, and all that goes under its guise, and that what does not accord with these manuscripts, and the subsequent fabrications thereof are beneath their contempt, to notice Dr Fauja Singh does not say so in so many words but the implied meanings, nuances and insinuations of his write-up are unmistakable. Dr. Fauja Singh, in his thesis, does not tell us, why he thinks so, but he takes it for granted that in November, 1675, Aurangzeb was not present at Delhi. Since the emperor then was not at Delhi, the entire Sikh story including the testament of Guru Gobind Singh about a prolonged and most significant dialogue between the Guru and the emperor,

1. Prof Teja Singh Dr. Ganda Singh in their book, *A Short History of the Sikhs* published by Orient Longman in the year 1950 had clearly stated at page 57 that the translation itself was very wrong. Therefore, Dr. Fauja Singh, (and later on Dr. Satish Chandra of NCERT) deliberately ignored the assertions of reputed Sikh historians to please political masters and indulged in academic dishonesty. Punjabi University, Patiala has published it in 1999 but did not mention that it was first published in 1950. Ed.

before, and leading to, the former's execution is shown as utterly imaginary and false and, by implication, such are the infirm and mendacious foundations upon which the superstructure of the epiphany and revolution of Sikhism and the Sikh history has been raised.

17. Understandably, there have been anguished protests against this gratuitous and shameful distortion and perversion of the Sikh history and the Sikh doctrine, but these protests have been brushed aside by Dr. Fauja Singh and his supporters mostly Sikhs, as uncalled for, unjustified, subversive of academic freedom, and non-conducive to 'scientific research' in history. Such is the pitiful condition to which the hapless Sikhs have been reduced today !

18. Was Aurangzeb not present in Delhi in November, 1675 when Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed under Imperial Orders and is the consistent Sikh recorded tradition and unbroken group-memory altogether devoid of any historical truth? This is the question we set out to consider of which question the foregoing merely forms a prologue.

19. Though Dr Fauja Singh does not mention it, it is more than likely that he relies upon the chronology worked out by Sir Jadunath Sarkar in his *Aurangzaeb and His Times* (5 volumes) wherein it is stated that Aurangzeb stayed at Hasan Abdal till his return to Delhi on 27th March, 1676 (p. III. 276) that is about 4½, months after the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur. If this computation of Sarkar can be shown as untrustworthy there is nothing whatever to cast any doubts on the account of martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur given by Guru Gobind Singh and other Sikh sources.

20. Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar's chronology is obviously based upon and derived from the Hijri dates given in the aforementioned Persian documents.

21. The Hijri era is a religious chronology commencing from the flight of Mohammad from Mecca to Medina (15th July, AD 622) and the following day, Friday, 16th July is equivalent to the 1st of Moharram, A.H. 1. The year is a lunar

one of 354 days and its primary functional use was and its determination and celebration of Muslim religious duties and celebrations, commencement of the fasting month, its termination and celebration of Id etc. but in Islamic societies, including India the era has been used for secular purposes also, inspite of complication arising out of its initial day always travelling backwards through the Julian Calendar of 365 days, thus making a complete circuit in 34 years. The reckonings derived from it have apparent initial points in A.D. 591, 593, and 600 though their real origin was in the 14th, 16th and 17th centuries. The emperor Akbar succeeded to the throne in February, AD 1556 in the Hijri year 963, which ran from 16th November 1555 to 3rd November 1556. In order to minimise, if not to obviate altogether, the confusion implicit in a lunar year for purposes of revenue administration which cannot but be based on a solar year to ensure that the crops maturations and revenue-collections occur during the same period in a given year. Akbar replaced Hijri by the *Shamsi-san*, the solar years. This secular reform did away with, a great deal of chronological confusion and multiplicity then prevalent in various parts of India in obvious attempts to co-ordinate, somehow, the true secular year, the solar year, with the Muslim religious lunar year and the era of the Hijri. This *Shamisan* introduced by Akbar was intended to replace the *Fasali-san* of upper India, the *Vilayati san* of Orissa, the *Bengali-san* and the *Maharashtra Arabi san*. The initial days of all these sans or eras differed from place to place into which jungle of dates, Akbar tried to introduce some kind of rational order, though this chronological jungle was, by no means, altogether cleared off. The magnitude and the complexity of the problem can best be appreciated by going through the details of the stupendous efforts that have, from the end of the 18th century to the beginning of the 20th century, been made by eminent Calendarists and Chronologists, beginning with the *Kalasankalita* (1825) of Warren, *Useful Tables* (1834-1836) of Prinsep, *Chronology* (1866) of Cowassijee Patell and *Book of*

Indian Eras (1833) of Cunningham, culminating in *Indian Calender* (1898) of Dikshit and *Epigraphia Indica* (1894) of Jacobi.

22. Aurangzeb, quit early in his career, as the emperor, abruptly stopped rationalisation of the secular chronological confusion of India by re-introducing Hijri era and Lunar chronology into all official levels of Indian administration with the result that, for more than half a century, the Mughal official records are vitiated chronologically, requiring expert know-how to make the dates given in our Persian records, understandable to us. It is to be noted that Aurangzeb, in this, had no other motive but that of religious fanaticism to change the entire face of India into a *Muslim* state and a *Sunni Muslim* society.

23. Sir Jadunath Sarkar has rendered a yeoman's service to the students of Indian history of this period by working out its Hijri Lunar dates into dates of the Julian solar calendar plausibly, but not always faultlessly.

24. There are inherent pitfalls which even Sarkar has not been able to escape.

25. Firstly, as we will show presently, the dates given in our Persian records by no means, tally with each other, always, and thus we are obliged to search for an outside point of reference. Secondly, the fact cannot be overlooked that Khafi Khan and Must'ad Khan wrote under obvious and great disadvantages, the one, under Aurangzeb's 'Emergency ordinances', so to speak, forbidding all recording to contemporary events, a total ban on historiography, and two, the utter non-availability of official records to those who, under difficult circumstances, wrote out their histories.

26. The dates of Hijri on which Sarkar had to work, are themselves impregnated with an element of uncertainty and also falsify such dates as every true Muslim would approve and accept, adjust and appropriate. For instance, if Aurangzeb so wished, in demonstrable interest of Islamic hegemony in India, that in the closing months of the year A.D.1675, all

records prepared or maintained by Muslims, must show that Aurangzeb was not in Delhi, then such, indeed, would be the case though it would merely be a political truth and not a historical truth.

27. This is the true explanation of the variance between the Sikh chronological records which consistently show Aurangzeb's presence in Delhi in November, 1675 and other dates given by Khafi Khan and Must'ad Khan of certain other events, for they would have us believe that no such thing as martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur at all took place in Delhi. These other dates refer to events of Aurangzeb's march to Hasan Abdal, his return to Delhi and his crushing of the Satnami insurgency.

28. These are the only dates available to Sarkar from which he has extracted and derived his own dates of the Julian calendar, according to which latter it is asserted that Aurangzeb returned from Hasan Abdal to Delhi on 27th March, 1676. The firm date given in the Sikh contemporary records and unbroken tradition, affirming that on Maghar *sudi*, *panchami* Vikram 1732, Aurangzeb was present in Delhi when Guru Tegh Bahadur was executed was neither available to Sarkar, nor, if it were available, he would have taken serious notice of it, in view of his poor opinion of the epiphany and history of Sikhism.

29. Khafi Khan gives two different dates of the Satnami rebellion with a difference of two years, one from the one. At one place, he mentions 1082 Hijri (p. II. 252) and at another place he mentions 1084 Hijri (p. II. 249). Sarkar has accepted 1084 Hijri as the correct date of Satnami rebellion, for reasons not explained satisfactorily, though obviously, he must have relied upon some outside test-measures to reject the earlier date and to accept the later date. If the earlier date is accepted as true, the entire edifice of the supposed assertion of Aurangzeb's absence from Delhi in November, 1675, crumbles. Must'ad Khan gives the date of Satnami rebellion as 1082 Hijri, which is the year early 1673 as calculated by Sarkar (III. 338) but a Portuguese contemporary author

Ormez, tells us that, Aurangzeb marched against Satnamis "as near as we can combine in April, 1674" (Fragments, 51) Ormez, dates agree, more than nearly with Khafi Khan than with Must'ad Khan, and if this chronology is to be preferred, then Aurangzeb's presence in Delhi at the end of 1675 becomes more than plausible. Dr. Fryer, another Portuguese, in a letter written between September 1674 and January, 1675, tells us that "even at this instance, he (Aurangzeb) is on a project to bring them all over to his faith and has already begun by too severe taxes, very severe ones, especially on the Brahmins, making them pay a gold-rupee per head and the inferior tribes proportionately." (*A New Account of East India and Persia*, p. 1275). But Manucci, an equally respectable contemporary authority assures us that "In 1679 he (Aurangzeb) reimposed *jeziah* in order to spread Islam and put down infidelity (*Storia*, p. II. 239). A difference of full four years in chronology is there. With regard to another most prominent event of Aurangzeb's reign as recorded by two well educated foreign contemporary observers about the date of the return of Aurangzeb from Hasan Abdal to Delhi, there is similar uncertainty. Khafi Khan at one place (p. II. 241) says that it was during the 19th regional year while at another place (p. II. 246) he says it was the 16th regional year, a difference of about three years. Must'ad Khan puts this date as 22nd Muharram; 1087 (p. 154), that would be early A.D. 1676. According to *Ma'asari-Alamgiri* of Must'ad Khan *Jejziah* was imposed in the 23rd regional year (p. 174) which would be 1090 Hijri or A. D. 1680 while Elliot and Dawson (p. VII. 294) gives this fateful date as 1088 Hijri, two years earlier than this, and the Khafi Khan's date, while Manucci gives this date as A. D. 1679, "after the death of Raja Jaswant Singh", as he puts it.

30. Now, these are the dates and such is the chronology from which Sarkar has extracted his dating frame-work, depending on which letter our new research scholars, seek to falsify and profane the entire infrastructure of Sikh doctrine and foundation of Sikh history.

31. In opposition to this confusion of narrative and want of historical dating, stands the firm date, clear, consistent and unassailable, that of Maghar *sudi panchami* of the Vikram samvat 1732, when Guru Tegh Bahadur was put to death in Delhi at which metropolis Aurangzeb was then present. Earlier he returned from his Hasan Abdal expedition, in or about March, 1675. This date is recorded by Sikh contemporaries on the blank sheets of the Sikh scripture copies, preserved and present in various parts of India to this day, frequently bearing the approval-signatures of Guru Gobind Singh testifying: *sa 1732 Guru Teg Bahadur ji samane vich dilli manghar sudi 5 vach pehar din chaudesh sri satguru kartapurkh nirankar.* (ਸੰਮਤ 1732 ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਜੀ ਸਾਮਾਨੇ ਵਿਚਿ ਦਿਲੀ ਮੱਘਰ ਸੁਦੀ 5 ਵੀਰਵਾਰ ਪਹਿਰ ਦਿਨ ਚੌਦਸ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੂ ਕਰਤਾਪੁਰਖ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ)

32. Latest and weighty historical judgement is available that supports the version enshrined in the chronicles. *Encyclopaedia of Islam* (New Edition) published in Leiden and London (1958) after careful investigation concludes under, Aurangzeb :

"The Pathans rose in revolt, the Yusufzais in 1083/1672 and the Afridis in 1083/1672, but though (Aurangzeb) stationed himself at Hasan Abdal (Rawalpindi District), the efforts of the imperial officers were strongly unavailing and peace could not be restored till 1085/1675" (p. 769)

33. From times immemorial, the campaigning season in India is October to February every year and, thus, it is obvious that by the end of March, 1675, Aurangzeb returned to Delhi well in time to order and see the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur.

34. A word before we conclude, about the Muslim Persian records which so fascinate and impress our tourists and research scholars of history in particular, "the histories of the Sikhs written by the Sikhs" these days. Modern man's passion for history is not very old and it is a mistake to

it as the natural behaviour of every civilised man. This interest manifests itself in two distinct ways that are inter-related.

- (1) A passion for historiography, the desire for an evermore complete and more exact knowledge of the past of humanity;
- (2) The tendency to define man, as above all, a historical being, conditioned and in the end, created by History. What is called 'historicism', *Historismus* *Storicismo*, as well as Marxism and certain Existential schools, these are the philosophies which, in one sense or other, ascribed fundamental importance to History and the 'historic moments'. This passion for history is a fairly recent passion; it dates from the second half of the 19th century. It is true that from the time of Herodotus, the Greeco-Latin man knew and cultivated the writing of history, but this was not what has come to be known as 'history' since the 19th century to know and describe as accurately as possible, all that has come to pass in the course of time. Herodotus, like Livy, like Orosius and even historians of the Renaissance wrote history in order to preserve examples and models and pass them on for our imitation. But for the last one hundred years or so the history has no longer been the source of exemplary models; it has become a scientific passion for exhaustive knowledge for all the adventures of mankind. This is an interest we find in no other past era. Practically all non-European cultures are without historic consciousness and even if they have a traditional historiography, as in China or in Islamic culture, its function is always to provide models, not to describe and preserve the truth and nothing but the truth. Indian Muslim chronicles, such as *Muntakhab-ul-lubab*, *Maasar-i-Almagiri*, *Siyyar-ul-matakhariin*, in fact, all the Muslim documents of traditional historiography from *Ibni-Khaldun* to *Harisi of Ibrat-nameh*, are to be appreciated in this background. Their writings are not objective attempts at gathering and grasping, as far as possible, the

whole panorama of the past, in all its panoply of conscious and motivated endeavours to portray the absolute and final validity of a ruling, imperial, monolithic Muslim society as ordained by Allah as revealed in the Koran. The concern to pejorate all that is alien or hostile to this final end, establishment of the preservation of a dissent-free Muslim society, to exalt all that is helpful and conducive to it, is imputed and owned up by all these chroniclers, without scruple and without hesitation and with a sense of exultation consequent upon a meritorious deed, well done. The Khan's detailed description of the accidental strangling of a grazier-boy during the course of a children's game, intended to project forth the image and function of the King in Islamic society. Guru Tegh Bahadur was depicted as inimical and hostile to this exclusively valid and final society and he was, therefore, ignored in their narrative as an irritating irrelevancy. If it was deemed as in the interest of this ideal society to create chroniclers, a confession on the point of the presence of the emperor at Delhi at the time of the Guru's execution, all Muslim records would unhesitatingly oblige, without exception. Sikh history, therefore, cannot be properly reconstructed by voluntarily falling into the net of the excellent Muslim chronicles of Persian records. "He who controls the past controls the future" says George Orwell. If the Sikh teachers and writers of Sikh history have any concern for the future of their own people, let them not be privy to permit those against whom the Sikhs had to wage a bitter and prolonged struggle for sheer survival be the controllers of the Sikhs' present and future.

A QUESTION OF LAW*

A Question has been asked; "According to what Law of the Muslim State was Guru Tegh Bahadur executed, or was it a lawless murder?" Kindly explain.

A. It was a legal execution under the laws of Shariat of a Muslim state to which Aurangzeb had converted his Government totally, though the formal process of converting the Mughal Government into a state based on *Shariat* openly started under Jehangir as guided by the Muslim fanatic, Sheikh Sirhandi, the Mujadeed.

2. During the Sultanate regimes and under the Pathan rulers, the Muslim law of Shariat usually prevailed in the state policies, particularly where the Hindus were involved as a party, but the beginnings of a full-fledged Muslim state were made by Jehangir and the process completed by Aurangzeb.

3. The Muslim Law or the *Shariat foundations* of a state are grounded on the twin foundation of the *Koran* and the Precepts of Mohammad, called, the Hadith. This Law of Shariat is clear and unambiguous in both these sources of Muslim Law that a person formally invited to embrace Islam becomes liable to death if he refuses to accept the invitation. As the *Tarikh-i-Ferozeshahi* of Barni records, the authoritative Quadi Mugith told Sultan Alauddin that the Muslim law in such cases was clear and categorical: *ama al-Islam-wa-ama al-qatal*.

4. There is another well-established rule of *Muslim Shariat*, that apostasy from Islam, *irtidad*; and public claim to

* TSR, December, 1976

independent prophethood such as detracts from the status of Mohammad as the last Prophet of mankind *akhir-ul ambiya* merits and attracts the death penalty. This crime is technically described as the gross heresy of *nabi-ul-kazib*.

5. These death penalties are not optional but imperative and non-discretionary, *hudud-Allah*, statutory penalties stated in *Koran*.

6. Again in Muslim theology, two kinds of supernatural powers are accepted as true and valid—the *karamat* and the *mojiza*. *Karamat* is that supernatural power given to those with whom Allah is pleased, such as the *pirs*, the *valis*, the *qutabs* and various other spiritually exalted believers. The *nabi*, the appointed messengers of God, such as those prophets belonging to the traditional line of Islam, Moses, Christ, Mohammad, etc. is invested by Allah with special miraculous powers to intervene in and change the course of the Laws of Nature and creation. This is *mojiza*, such as the power which Mohammad displayed when he severed the moon into two separate pieces, *shaqqulqumaar*, and when he ascended beyond the seventh Heaven, on a miraculous horse. This must be distinguished from the *karamat* variety of miracles.

7. When Guru Tegh Bahadur was called upon to demonstrate his implied claim to independent prophethood such as was entailed by the Guru's declaration that a universal and a total Muslim society was not the Will of God, he was expected to show a *mojiza* and not a mere miracle or *karamat*, a number of which miracles were shown to Aurangzeb earlier by Ram Rai, the diplomatic plenipotentiary of Guru Har Rai. This *mojiza* Guru Tegh Bahadur designated as a mere magic trick, *natak cetak* and flatly declined to perform.

8. In this context, two grave crimes of Guru Tegh Bahadur, under the basic laws of a Muslim state, grounded in the *Shariat*, stand proven and established to the hilt: (1) Guru Tegh Bahadur flatly declined to accept Islam, when invited to do so; (2) Guru Tegh Bahadur contemptuously refused to perform a *mojiza*, the conclusive characteristic of

prerogative of a *nabi*, the status which the Guru was deemed to have claimed for himself.

9. On both these counts he was adjudged as deserving the statutory penalty of death. The final judgement of the supreme Muslim Juris council, Adbul Wahab Bohra condemned Guru Tegh Bahadur to death on those two counts on referral of the Guru's case to him by Aurangzeb.

10. The judgement was true and sound according to the State Laws of Shariat, and the counts on which it was based simultaneously proclaim and testify to the greatness and glory and the uniqueness of the martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur. Guru Gobind Singh has rightly said that Guru Tegh Bahadur laid down his life for freedom of human conscience, the dignity of religion, and that Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom is unparalleled in the annals of human history :

ਸਾਧਨ ਹੇਤਿ ਇਤੀ ਜਿਨਿ ਕਰੀ ॥ ਸੀਸੁ ਦੀਆ ਪਰ ਸੀ ਨ ਉਚਰੀ ॥੧੩॥

ਧਰਮ ਹੇਤ ਸਾਕਾ ਜਿਨਿ ਕੀਆ ॥ ਸੀਸੁ ਦੀਆ ਪਰ ਸਿਰਹੁ ਨ ਦੀਆ ॥...

ਠੀਕਰਿ ਫੋਰਿ ਦਿਲੀਸਿ ਸਿਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪੁਰ ਕੀਯਾ ਪਯਾਨ ॥

ਤੇਗ ਬਹਾਦਰ ਸੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਕਰੀ ਨ ਕਿਨਹੂੰ ਆਨ ॥੧੫॥

(ਬਚਿਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ)

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਰੂ ਰਾਮਦਾਸ ਲਾਇਕਰੀ

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਸਿੰਘ

SIKHS AND COMMUNISM*

The early infiltration of Communism amongst Sikhs and the emotional liveliness with which it has been cherished amongst many of them has aroused curiosity in the minds of intelligent observers of this phenomenon of contemporary India. Some think, it is wholly fortuitous, whereas others believe that there is casual nexus between it and the original Sikh impulse. A large number of Sikh Communists believe that Communism is nothing but an exegesis and an extension of the Sikh doctrine, though the better informed amongst them cannot have failed to notice the deep chasm that divides the basic postulates and metaphysical doctrines of Sikhism, and the fundamental dogmas of Communism as a social and a quasi-religious theory. Be that as it may, a free discussion and dispassionate thinking on the subject is desirable.

When in 1950, in the course of a discussion on Sikhism with an intelligent Hindu friend at Simla I remarked to him that the Order of the Khalsa was the real prototype of the All Russia Communist Party of Lenin and further suggested that this might be the real cause and explanation of the fascination which the Comintern has exerted over a section of the restless Sikhs. My Hindu friend reacted unfavourably towards this theory and considered it similar to a certain other contemporary intellectual movement of the Punjab which postulates that all the modern scientific theories and discoveries, so far made and yet to be made, are adumbrated in the *Vedas* as interpreted by these gentlemen.

* TSR, August, 1977

TOYNBEE'S ENDORSEMENT

It was almost seven years later at the end of 1957 that this Hindu friend came across a certain passage, in an abridged publication of the monumental, *A Study of History*, by Arnold Toynbee, which runs as follows :

The intensity of an alien intelligentsia's hatred of the Western middle class gave the measure of its forbidding of its inability to emulate Western middle class achievement. The classic instance, up-to-date in which this embittering prescience had been justified, was the Russian intelligentsia's catastrophic failure, after the first two Russia Revolutions in 1917, to carry out its fantastic mandate to transform the wreck of Petrine Czardom into a parliamentary constitutional state in the 19th century western style. The Kerensky regime was a fiasco because it was saddled with the task of making bricks with straw, of making a parliamentary government, without a solid, competent, prosperous and experienced middle class to draw upon. By contrast, Lenin succeeded because he set himself to create something which could meet the situation. His All Union Communist Party was not, indeed, a thing entirely without precedent. In Islamic Muslim History it had been anticipated in the slave-household of the Ottoman Padishah, in the Qyslbash fraternity of devotees of Safawis, and in the Sikh Khalsa that had been called into being by a decision to fight the Mughal ascendancy with its own weapons. In these Islamic and Hindu fraternities the ethos of Russian Communist Party is already unmistakably discernible. Lenin's claim to originality rests on his having reinstated this formidable potential instrument for himself and on his priority in applying it to a special purpose of enabling a non-western society to hold its own against the modern West by mastering the latest devices of western technology

while at the same time eschewing the West's current orthodox ideology.

(Arnold Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Abridgement, Vols VII-X Oxford 1957 pp. 187-188)

THREE QUESTIONS

Let us examine three questions, the same which the Hindu friend, referred to earlier, posed after seeing this confirmation, by a European Scholar, of my contention and which confirmation alone, in the eyes of this friend, conferred respectability on it. These three questions are (1) Were these Islamic fraternities imbued with and grounded in the same ethos as the Order of the Khalsa? (2) Has the order of the Khalsa common characteristics with the All-Russia Communist Party? (3) Is communism consistent with Sikhism?

OTTOMAN SLAVE HOUSEHOLD'S SELFISH MOTIVE

The slave households of the Ottoman Padishah entertained sentiments of firm loyalty to the ruling Turkish family for considerations that were purely mundane and grounded in immediate self-interest. The worldly interests of each and every member of this slave household were so inalienably and inextricably bound up with the existence and continuation in power of the dynasty of the Ottoman Padishah so that former could not exist without the latter, and in being loyal to the royal household, therefore, the slave household were being only loyal to themselves. Their loyalty thus had no other ideal than their own mundane interests. It clearly had no reference to anything beyond their own moderately enlightened self-interest. This type of loyalty is not rare even in the animal kingdom, and it is the general mode of social behaviour of all sane human beings. It is not infused with any self abnegating idealism and to consider it as a prototype of the All Russian Communist Party is thoroughly mistaken.

QYSLBASH LOYALTY GROUNDED IN GRATITUDE

The Qyslbash fraternity stands on a some what different footing, however, their loyalty to the Safawi dynasty originated in gratitude and was sustained by religious and national patriotism. Sheikh Saif-Ud-Din Izhak was a lineal descendant of Musa, the seventh Imam and forefather of the famous and fabulous Aga Khan. He was a pious Sufi residing at Ardebil, south-west of the Caspian, in the 14th century. Timur, known to European as Temerlane (Timuri Ling), (1335-1405) was so impressed by the stories of the Sheikh's piety that he sought him at his abode, and was so charmed by the visit that, as a consequence of the Sheikh's intercession, he released from captivity a large number of prisoners of Turkish or Georgian origin, taken in wars with Beyzid. This ensured to the Sheikh constant devotion and gratitude of these men, and this sentiment of loyalty was maintained by their descendants for the members of the Sheikh's family in successive generations. Junaid the great grandson of the Sheikh, married a sister of Uzan Hasan of royal family and the youngest son of this marriage Ismail, born in 1480, was the Sufi who founded the Safawi dynasty by his assumption of royalty in 1499. Shah Abbas the Great was the greatest king of this dynasty and he was a contemporary of our Akbar the Great. He came to throne in 1587, and Sir Anthony Sherlay, an English soldier of fortune in his service wrote of him: "His furniture of mind infinitely royal, wise valiant, liberal, temperate, merciful and an exceeding lover of justice." In 1598 he made his Capital at Isfahan, where on a plateau over 5300 feet above sea-level a superb city grew up which early in the 17th century had a population of over 600,000 where from the Iranian saying: *Isfihan nisfi Jahan*, 'Isfihan is half the world'. This dynasty was ended in 1736 with the accession of Nadir as the Shah of Persia, who made his acquaintance with the Sikhs after his sack of Delhi and the loot of Peacock Throne and who correctly prophesied that, "*az dahani-shan bui shahanshah*

miayed; " that is, "the Sikhs are clearly destined for being the masters of India.'

The Qyslbash fraternity throughout remained loyal to Safawi rulers and they made every sacrifice possible to sustain them in power. The Safawis were rightly regarded as the national monarchs, not only in respect of origin and birth but in essence and spirit also, and it is, therefore, legitimate to assume that the loyalty of the Qyslbash was based upon national sentiment as well as communal gratitude. This is the basic characteristic of ethos of the Qyslbash loyalty to the Safawis. This loyalty was essentially personal and secondary to national and the idealism which sustained. It consisted of communal gratitude and national pride. This is the ethos with its basic component of gratitude and patriotism.

ORIGIN OF THE KHALSA MISUNDERSTOOD

The order of the Khalsa has no contingent origin as it is sometimes believed. This basic misunderstanding about the nature and aims of the Khalsa has not only misled scholars of the calibre of Toynbee, but has also vitiated the Sikh historical impulse as well as the operative attitudes of other Indians towards the Sikhs. For want of proper analysis and non-availability of meagre original documents to the scholars on Sikhism, there has been created and perpetuated the wholly false impression that Guru Gobind inaugurated the Order of the Khalsa to meet some historical contingency such as fighting the Mughal rulers, and the real truth, to strengthen which Guru Gobind Singh himself took such pains in his writings and exhortations, is thus almost forgotten even by the generality of the Sikhs themselves.

Guru Gobind Singh made it abundantly clear that the Order of the Khalsa had been founded to achieve a Divine Aim, which was not contingent upon time and place.

1. ਆਗਿਆ ਭਈ ਅਕਾਲ ਕੀ ਤਬੀ ਚਲਾਯੋ ਪੰਥ ॥

2. ਪੰਥ ਪ੍ਰਚਾਰ ਕਰਬੇ ਕਹੁ ਸਾਜਾ ॥

3. ਜਾਹਿ ਤਹਾਂ ਤੈ ਧਰਮੁ ਚਲਾਇ ॥
ਕਬੁਧਿ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਲੋਕ ਹਟਾਇ ॥੨੯॥

(ਬਚਿੱਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ)

and he proclaimed it in no uncertain terms that he was doing nothing which was not logical and natural entelechy of the doctrines of Guru Nanak. "He who understandeth thus, knoweth truly. He who knoweth not this truth understandeth not."

ਜਿਨ ਜਾਨਾ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਸਿਧ ਪਾਈ ॥
ਬਿਨ ਸਮਝੇ ਸਿਧ ਹਾਥਿ ਨ ਆਈ ॥

(ਬਚਿੱਤ੍ਰ ਨਾਟਕ)

The order of the Khalsa is thus a Party of voluntary members, selected on the basis of ideology and strict psychological and character-qualifications relating to disposition and behaviour patterns, overriding geographical, racial and sex limitations and pledged to establish a global Society of Human Brotherhood, the basis of which is spiritual and the ground of which is material abundance. For this purpose, the Order of the Khalsa aspire to achieve control of political power. The original sources on the Sikh doctrine and a proper understanding of it leave no doubt that this is the case and it is implicit in the text of the *japu*, the first chapter of the *Guru Granth* itself.

REAL PROTOTYPE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

Once the matter is put this way, it becomes plain that the Order of the Khalsa is the only and the real prototype of the Communist Party of Lenin and so far as the ethos of both the parties is concerned, and that Lenin was mistaken in his belief that this Party was a unique phenomenon in the history of human societies. The differences between the nature of their respective aims and ideologies that inspire them, however, are no less striking.

FUNDAMENTAL DIFFERENCE

The basic assumption of Marxism, which is the credo that inspires the Communist Party, is that the essence of the real

is its characteristic of being perceived through the physical sense, and this is its Materialism which it regards as the only true philosophy and metaphysics. Sikhism sharply joins issues with Communism on this postulate. Sikhism postulates the idea as real and more primary and conceives of reality, as ideational and not as material, and therefore asserts that man shall be regenerated and liberated through introversion in contra-distinction to the essential and exclusive acceptance of extroversion as the only true approach towards reality. This difference is fundamental, far-reaching and pregnant with significant practical consequences, and Sikhism will never meet on this issue: *Bhagatan te sansarian mel kade na hoi.*

SIKHISM DENIES COMMUNIST THEORY

The communist postulate on this issue implicates another significant and far-reaching proposition of Communism, which regards all movement as real, which generates the assumption that human history is conditioned not by ideas or man made laws, but by the economic organisation of the society, which in turn is based on the mechanism of production and exchange of goods. This is the Marxism interpretation of History. Sikhism denies this proposition and considers its apparent plausibility as naive and superficial generated by absence of a profounder critical faculty and intuition. It is not true that all history is economic history, that all intellectual, political and social changes can be explained as consequences of changes in material production, and that 'the class struggle' that have determined the past of mankind, will determine the future until all classes have been eliminated giving birth to some utopia on earth, and Sikhism, therefore, refuses to allow its social and political organisation and conduct to be determined and deflected by this erroneous mode of thought, and the Order of the Khalsa, thus, can never countenance the all too familiar institutions of dictatorship without popular support, without an independent legal

system, and without the free competition of ideas and the sharp assault of free criticism, which errors are the warp and woof of a communist system.

Again, the Order of the Khalsa and the Communist party are separated, by a moral *abyss* that is unbridgeable. The 'immoralism' of Communism is its basic postulate, whereas the Order of the Khalsa attaches fundamental importance to the ethical character of the means than even to the ends themselves, and the Order of the Khalsa regards ethical values, howsoever dimly perceived in different societies and ages, as absolute and not relative and compromisable.

BRAIN-WASHING AND PHYSICAL REGIMENTATION

Lastly, the Order of the Khalsa was intended to be an elect body, a political and spiritual aristocracy on account of its regenerated character, and liable to persecution because of its pugnacious distinctiveness and refusal to compromise, pledged to reform and regenerate a deeply corrupted and unconverted world by example and precept, by persuasion and control, but never through coercion and regimentation of the mind and body, and this also places communism and Sikhism poles apart.

Thus, Sikhism, and the Order of the Khalsa, which is pledged to propagate Sikhism and to ensure its prevalence, considers the worship of man and man's collective achievements, whether this appears as Communism or Nationalism, as the most serious challenge to the true Religion, the Protection of which is the main objective and aim of the Khalsa.

What is it then that has made it possible for communist ideas to obtain a hold on a section of the Sikhs ?

TWO REASONS FOR COMMUNIST'S APPEAL

There are two reasons: One accidental, and the other emotional.

Ever since the middle of the last century when the Khalsa lost its sovereignty to the new-low diplomacy of the European adventurers, there has been a natural and deep-rooted restlessness and frustration in the Sikh heart. Not that the occidental was basically immoral or unmoral just like the Communist Party, the Sikhs, only after they met with political disaster at his hands, not in the battlefield but on the more slippery ground of political trickery. To Dr. Wolff, who visited Lahore in 1832, Ranjit Singh said, "You say, you travel about for the sake of religion, why then do you not preach to the Englishmen in Hindustan, who have no-religion at all?" When Dr. Wolff repeated this to the Governor General Lord William Bentinck at Simla, he observed: 'Alas, this is the opinion of all the natives about us, all over India.' In reply to a question by Dr. Wolff, "How may one come nigh unto God?" the Maharaja replied: "One can come nigh unto God by making an alliance with British Government as I lately did with Laird Nawab Sahib (the Governor-General) at Rupar (Joseph Wolff, DD LLD, *Travels and adventures*, P. 375)

NUCLEUS OF SIKH COMMUNISTS

This insight into European political character, however, could not save the Sikhs from being enslaved as the rest of India had already been done. But the Sikhs, in their heart of hearts, never reconciled themselves to the loss of their sovereignty, without which the Order of the Khalsa cannot make any progress towards fulfilment of their divine assignment, their final goal. The dawn of the 20th century found a band of Sikhs immigrants to North America organised into the well-known Ghadar Party, the Party of Mutiny against subjugation, and as such on the eve of the World War I, a number of them landed on Indian soil with the object of ousting the British hold on the Country. The attempt proved abortive and most of these revolutionaries ended their lives on the gallows, or in infernal jails of Andamans. The last

words of these Sikhs in their last moments on earth are recorded :

"The Khalsa shall guide the destinies of mankind, and eventually there shall remain no opposite camp. For, all shall realize, after bitter frustration that, there is no redemption except in the Way of Life that the Khalsa upholds."

"This is pre-ordained that, the Guru's Amry, shall control and guarantee the welfare of the whole of India. Then indeed, the New Era of peace and prosperity for mankind shall dawn." *Raj karega khalsa, aki rahe na koi, khwar hoe sabh milenge bache saran jo hoe. Dilli takht par bahegi ab Guru ki fauj, Raj krega khalsa Vaddi hoeige mauj.*

It was the remnants of these Sikh revolutionaries that constituted the nucleus of the now powerful group of Sikh Communists. They established contacts with the Comintern in the early twenties of this century, with the avowed object of securing foreign aid and help for freeing India from the foreign yoke, since the Comintern was the only organisation then outside India which promised such help readily. This brought some of the most ardent and sincere, not necessarily politically wise, of these Sikhs under the spell and discipline of the All-Russia Communist Party and the relationship thus forged has endured.

EMOTIONAL APPEAL, TWO-FOLD

The emotional reason for the hold of the communist idea certain section of the Sikhs is two-fold. The similarity of the Order of the Khalsa and the All-Russia Communist Party of the Lenin has already been suggested. The attraction of self-sacrificing work in a dedicated spirit as is demanded of a communist field worker, comes natural to a Sikh, since it gives him ample opportunity of releasing the impulse of self-abnegation in the service of fellow-beings generated by the Sikh teachings which Guru Gobind Singh harnessed to the Order of the Khalsa. By working as a loyal and devoted

member of the Communist Party, this class of Sikh feels that they are loving Sikhism and practicing the teachings of the Gurus in the manner that Guru Gobind Singh enjoined upon them. Secondly, this Sikh is not attracted by what Marx says or by what the party dogma of the moment is. What fascinates him and ensures his devotion to the party is what he thinks and what lies behind it – its essential humanitarianism. To be a champion of the oppressed and the under-privileged is the basic Sikh motivation, and the shiboleths of the communist parties are admirably designed to appeal to this sentiment.

POLYRELIGIOSITY

These are the basic reasons that underline the hold of the communist idea and the influence of the Communist Party amongst a considerable number of Sikhs, though it cannot be denied that, with the lapse of time and persistent indoctrination there has come into existence a top layer of Sikh communist leadership that is fully aware and that enthusiastically accepts the real hiatus that separates the teachings of the Gurus from the dogmas of Communism. But he finds it in the interest of the cause to maintain the pretension that by being a Communist he is no less a Sikh. He is shrewd enough to realize that the main function of political ideas is to express in an effective and pungent manner the political attitudes which some group of people feel that it must consolidate within itself, foster in a society at large, and set up against those of its opponents, and that without this deep co-ordination of belief no common action for great ends is possible. He is therefore, keenly aware that if he brings out too clearly the deep chasm that separates Sikhism from Communism, the Sikh communist workers will either become non-communists or what anthropologists call, polyreligious, for it is reason, and knowing that moral scruples are uncommunistic he never attacks or repudiates Sikhism openly, in accordance with the guideline given by the Communist comrades from Moscow.

direct, directing the Sikhs turned communists not, yet, to undo the Sikh mark from their faces and to observe Sikh religious symbolism carefully and diligently so as better to misguide and ensnare the Sikhs. Here it is worth-noting that the prominent Sikh religious symbolism, unshorn hair and uncut beard are anathema to genuine communists as symptomatic of bourgeois decadence *Le Parisienne Libre* Paris (as quoted in the *Indian Readers' Digest* of March, 1975, p 30) remarks that :

It is amusing to note that although Marx, Lenin, Ho Chinh Minh and Yeidel are among the world's most famous bearded men, many communist countries consider beards as anti-social, an obvious sign of bourgeoisie decadence. The Romanian Government, it seems, recently decreed the need for a special permit to wear a beard. Three grounds are considered legitimate: being an actor playing the role of a bearded character, having an excessively receding chin, on scarred chin. The situation has reached such a point that those men who are permitted the imperialist bourgeoisie provocation of having hair on their chin, must carry a special card like a Driver's Licence, which they are obliged to have with them at all times and must show when challenged by the authorities.

Now, polyreligiosity describes a social condition in which history and myth have lost their drastic characters, their capacity to impose obligations and compelling images, and thus they no longer provide a basis for continuity of conviction and behaviour. A polyreligious Sikh is shorn of the very advantage which he has a fearless and self-sacrificing revolutionary and he, therefore, becomes a useless member of the Communist Party. He is a great asset only if he retains his pristine Sikh impulse intact as his motivating force in action and at the same time owes willing allegiance to the Party. This analysis alone seems to offer an explanation of the pains which the Sikh communists have taken during the last quarter of a

century to win and retain an effective share and position in the Sikh political and religious societies and institutions.

Those well-informed in the subject know that in Sikhism the supreme, all over-riding value is religion. That which opposes or hinders the religious dimension of man, is evil : *jalau aisi rit jit main piara visrai*. While for communism the first priority is to destroy and suppress all religious and religious attitudes, as Lenin points out in his essay, *On the Importance of Militant Materialism*, wherein Lenin resolutely condemns "any conciliatory attitude towards religious ideology."

THE GOLDEN TEMPLE : ITS THEO-POLITICAL STATUS*

The world-famous Golden Temple of the Sikhs, situated at Amritsar in India, bears *Harimandar*, 'the Temple of God', as its original name and it forms an island in a lake to which the name of Amritsar was given by the Nanak V, Guru Arjan (1563-1606), in the year 1589, when he laid the foundations of what is now known as the Golden Temple, and the town which grew around this Mecca of the Sikhs has only subsequently acquired the name of Amritsar.

The Nanak V, requested his great contemporary mystic and Muslim Savant, Mir Mohammed Muayyinul Islam, popularly known as *Mian Mir*, to lay the foundation stone of the temple and this fact, as well as the name bestowed on the lake, bears a basic significance in relation to the Sikh doctrines.

The impact of Islam on North Western India in the 11th century had been through military conquest and sword, and this had naturally created reactions in the proud and sensitive Hindu mind, that resulted in impassable barriers of hatred and prejudice between the two world-culture currents and their mutual contacts have, therefore, left irritating and unfortunate monuments of bigotry and misunderstanding, spiritual and physical, that still mark the Indian scene.

The Sikh prophets, the Nanaks, desired to level down these barriers with a view to discover and provide a common spiritual ground for the two, Hinduism and Islam, where Hinduism gets over its injured superiority and sense of

* TSR, October, 1977

exclusiveness and Islam, its arrogance, born out of military superiority. The Nanak V declared :

ਮੁਸਲਮਾਣੁ ਮੋਮ ਦਿਲਿ ਹੋਵੈ ॥ ਅੰਤਰ ਕੀ ਮਲੁ ਦਿਲ ਤੇ ਧੋਵੈ ॥
ਦੁਨੀਆ ਰੰਗ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਨੇੜੈ ਜਿਉ ਕੁਸਮ ਪਾਟੁ ਘਿਉ ਪਾਕੁ ਹਰਾ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 1084)

'Let Muslims rediscover the truth that the essence of religious practice is compassion and its goal, the purification of soul, and that political utilitarianism is foreign to Islam, as such, and let the Hindus concede the Islam, thus understood, is as respectable and ceremoniously pure as the flowers, the silk, the deerskin and the butter-fat.'

SIKHISM—A MEETING GROUND OF HINDUISM AND ISLAM

And since Sikhism was to be this common meeting ground between these two world culture streams, that is why a prominent Muslim divine was asked to lay the foundation of the Golden Temple, Amritsar. The name was given to the lake encircling this temple, as *amrita* means, the enduring principle of all that is, in Hindu metaphysical thought and water is the symbol of the first impulse of manifestation of the Unmanifest in Aryan thought-idiom, and the Golden Temple in the embrace of the waters of Immortality, thus was intended to be a profound symbol of future confluence of the world-cultures into a universal culture for the mankind.

In this temple, the proposed centre of a world-culture and world religion, the Nanak V installed the Sikh scripture, *Guru Granth Sahib*, and ever since, the presiding place, even when the Sikh Gurus were personally present, has remained reserved for the Book and the religious ceremonial and services have exclusively and always consisted of prayers to singing praises of, and meditation upon God in *sanctum-sanctorum* this of Sikhism.

It was in 1609, that Nanak VI, Guru Hargobind (1595-1644) erected the *Akal Takht* edifice opposite the entrance

bridge-head of the Golden Temple, upon which the Guru sat in state, wearing two swords of dominion over the two worlds, the seen and the unseen, and the peculiar Sikh doctrine of Double Sovereignty took birth, the essence of which is that a man of religion must always owe his primary allegiance to Truth and Morality and he must never submit to the exclusive claim to the secular state to govern the bodies and minds of men and the whole of subsequent Sikh History must be seen as an enfoldment of this Sikh attitude, if it is to be properly understood. The Nanak X, Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) explained this doctrine to Mughal emperor, Aurangzeb, in a written communication, the *Zafarnameh* (1707), in the following words :

ਚੂੰ ਕਾਰ ਅਜ ਹਮਾ ਹੀਲਤੇ ਦਰ ਗੁਜ਼ਸ਼ਤ ॥

ਹਲਾਲ ਅਸਤੁ ਭਰਦਨ ਬ ਸ਼ਮਸ਼ੀਰ ਦਸਤ ॥22॥

"When all means of peaceful persuasion fail, it is legitimate (for a man of religion) to move his hand to the hilt of the sword."

This Sikh doctrine of Double Sovereignty promulgated in the beginning of the 17th century has curiously modern ring and flavour, as from 19th century onwards, a growing school of writers in Europe have tended to think on the lines in which it is grounded. The main substance of this doctrine is that any sovereign state which includes Sikh populations and groups as citizens, must never make the paranoia pretensions of almighty absolutism, entailing the concept of total power, entitled to rule over the bodies and minds of men, in utter exclusiveness. Any state which lays such claims *qua* the Sikhs, shall automatically forfeit its moral right to demand allegiance of the Sikhs, and there is thus an eternal antagonism between such a state and the collective community of the Sikhs, represented by the Order of the Khalsa, and in this deadly duel the state shall never emerge out as finally victorious for self-destruction is the fruit of the seed of non-limitation, and the status and prerogatives of the Khalsa are imprescriptible.

The 19th century German writer, Schulz supports the basic premise of this doctrine by asserting that the view that the state is absolutely supreme and incapable of doing wrong is misconceived and dangerous (*Deutsches Staatsrecht*, Vol I Sec. 16). The whole Sikh history is a relentless *jehad* against this dangerous misconception, and the Sikhs have always insisted that a state fit and entitled to demand their allegiance must *ab initio* recognize and concede its own self-limited character, arising out of the principles of morality, the teachings of Religion, the principles of abstract justice, the principles of the Sikhs' meta legal constitution which lays down that (1) they must be approached and dealt with at state level as a collective group and entity, and (2) They must be governed impersonally, that is, through the rule of law and not by arbitrary will, and this self-limitation must further be circumscribed by the immemorial customs, long established traditions and the facts of the history of the Sikhs. This Sikh doctrine is, in essence, the same which today finds explicit expression in the modern concept of the pluralistic state, which recognises that the State in practice is the government, and the government is no more than a group in control of the governmental machinery, and that the aims and objects of this group, may, any time, clash with those of other groups, not in power. The Government may be temporary principal of all such groups, but it is only *prim us inter pares*, the elder amongst equals; it is not the sole repository of power or focal of loyalty. This is, indeed, the sole essence of the Sikh doctrine of Double Sovereignty, which finds powerful support in the writings of professor Harold Laski, Mr. G.D.H. Cole, and the French jurist, Duguit, and also Dr. J.N. Figgis.

The Sikh revolt during the 17th and 18th centuries against the Mughal state was in reality, an attempt to assert their doctrine of Double Sovereignty against the Muslim absolutist, theomonic theory of State, as a result of which the Sikhs had to pass through the valley of death, as the narrative that follows would show, before they emerged out with the

sceptre of political sovereignty in their hands, and it would be well to understand that clouds relations between the Sikhs and the State is also grounded in the same doctrinal conflict.

In 1708, Guru Gobind Singh, after protracted discussions and parleys with the Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah, the son and successor of Aurangzeb, came to the firm conclusion that "all means of peaceful persuasion" had failed, and it had, therefore, become the right and duty of the Sikhs to "move the hand to the hilt of the sword", and in the same year, (February 1708), the Guru initiated a Hindu *yogi* and occultist, Madhudas *Bairagi*, as a Sikh and renamed him, Banda Singh and then appointed him the Generalissimo of the Sikhs, after conferring upon him the military title *Bahadur*. Banda Singh Bahadur, was then ordered to proceed to Punjab with the assignment of "due chastisement of the Mughal rulers, who have usurped the power that belongs to the people, condign punishment of those guilty of atrocities, destruction of their military bases and re-establishment of the freedom of the people."¹

Banda Singh Bahadur carried out his assignment with admirable fidelity and in 1710, declared the freedom of the province of Sirhind, fixed as its capital the fortified Mukhalispur, in the hills, near Ambala, and the Sikhs adopted the legend on their state seal which began:

"We hereby place our impress of sovereignty upon both the worlds, the seen and the unseen."²

And thus they reiterated the basic doctrine of Sikhism, that of Double Sovereignty.

After the collapse of political power of the Sikhs under Generalissimo Banda Singh Bahadur, in 1716, there follows a complete blackout till 1721, when the Sikhs shifted their centre of activities, their spiritual and political capital and

1. "Turken te nij levan bair pathio Gur ne mujh ko kar Banda, mai kar khuar bajde ko mar sarhind, ujad karehon suchhanda, Giani Gian Singh, *Panth Prakash, kavita* - (1880), II, p. 572.

2. Sikkeh zad bar har du alam.

their acropolis to the Golden Temple, the lake that surrounds it, and the complex of buildings, including *Akal Takht*, that are attached to it.

Ever Since 1721, the Golden Temple, with the complex of attached structures, has remained the centre of the Sikh world, the Sikh history, the Sikh politics and the Sikh theophany. Throughout the last 250 years, whether the Sikhs were declared as outlaws by the state, whether the Golden Temple and its adjuncts were reduced to mass of ruins or they were forcibly occupied by the state, whether the Sikhs were a sovereign people or politically subjugated, they have never abandoned or compromised the position that, (1) the Golden Temple and its adjuncts are the hub of the Sikh world, not a matter of concession by any worldly power, but as an inherent right of the Sikh people; *Sui generis* and inalienable and (2) there is no ultimate dichotomy in the true Sikh doctrine between this world and the next, the secular and the religious, the political and the spiritual.

STATUS AND POSITION OF THE GOLDEN TEMPLE

This position and this status of the Golden Temple is unique in the religious or political centres of world history.

It is the Mecca of the Sikhs, because it is the religious centre of the Sikhs, but it is vastly more.

It is the St. Peter's at Rome, for it is the capital of Sikh theocracy, but it is very much more and also something else and different. Sikhism has no ordained priestly class and therefore, there can be no theocratic political state of the Sikhs in which the priests rule in the name of an invisible God. They have no corpus of civil law of divine origin and sanction and they, therefore, must have a state based on secular laws and not theocratic laws. It is, more, because it remains the real capital of ultimate Sikh allegiance, whatever the political set-up at the time being.

It is the Varanasi or Benaras of Sikhism, because it is the holiest of the holies of the faith, but it is not precisely

because the true Sikh doctrine does not approve of any tradition or belief which seeks to tie up theophany with geography.

It is the Jerusalem of Sikhism because it is the historical centre of the epiphany of Sikhism. But it is not precisely that because Sikhism, as a religion, is not history-grounded, that is, its validity is not tied up with or dependent upon any historical event.

It is not precisely the political capital of the Sikhs, because political capital presupposes a state under the control of the Sikhs, and when the Sikhs do have such a state, it is not imperative that its administrative centre must be at Amritsar and even when it is, the Golden Temple and its precincts shall still retain their peculiar independent character apart from this administrative centre. When the Sikhs do not have a sovereign state of their own, the Golden Temple, with its surrounding complex, continuously retain its theo-political status, which may be suppressed by political power, compromised by individuals or questioned by politicians, but which remains and never can be extinguished, for it is *sui generis* and inalienable, and inprescriptible.

It is owing to this unique status, grounded in certain peculiar doctrine of Sikhism that, many misunderstandings continuously arise concerning the use of the Golden Temple with its surrounding complex, for "political purposes", for allowing ingress into it and housing of those whom the political state may deem as "offenders", and for pursuing "extra religious activities" from inside its precincts. The Sikhs, themselves, have never viewed any of these activities, started or controlled from inside the precincts of the Golden Temple, as either improper, or repugnant to the Sikh doctrine, or contrary to the Sikh historical tradition. The reasons for this Sikh attitude are three, in the main, not singly, but collectively:

One reason is that this geographical site itself is charged with theopathic influences such as no other known and still accepted site on earth including the old site of the Solomon's

Temple, revered by three great religions of the world, Judaism, Christianity and Islam can claim to be.

PRE-HISTORIC ANTIQUITY OF AMRITSAR

Ever since the man on this earth became civilized in any comprehensive sense, about four or five millennia ago, human imagination seems to find some foothold to countenance the belief that the lake engirdling the Golden Temple marks the site of an extensive pre-classical civilization of the most basic activity of man, the religion. The most extensive pre-classical civilization of the world, the Indus valley civilization, stretched, in the third millennium B.C. from Rupar at the foot of the Simla hills to Sutkagendor near the shores of the Arabian Sea, a stretch of one thousand miles, and the site of the Golden Temple lies in the heart of this great river-system. The prominent feature situated "Bath" or *sarovar* in the newly dug up ancient mound of Mohenjodaro, as readily suggests to mind the central significance of water, reservoirs in the metaphysical thought and religious practices of these ancient people as springs before the mind's eye, the Golden Temple, lake surrounded.

Our proto-historical records, the Pauranas, and the pre-Christian era, Buddhist traditions definitely assert that, from ancient times, there has existed a natural and holy lake of water,³ Where the Golden Temple is now situated and the general physical layout of the site amply confirms the probability of these assertions. A bird's-eye view of the area, from a

3. In *vaivasyat paurana*, a genre of ancient Sanskrit text reduced into literary form in about the first century of Christian era, but of much greater antiquity of contents there is mention of Amarkuta (synonym of Amritsar, Punjabi, Amritsar), 'a holy lake situated betwixt the rivers Vipasa (Modern Bias) and Airavati (Modern Ravi). For the possession of which, in the pre-History epoch of creation, a fierce struggle took place between the gods and anti-gods, for the outcome of this struggle would decide as to whether the forces of religion will triumph in the current World age or those of irreligion. The gods came out victorious and Amritsar is now the Centre of oecumenical religion.

aeroplane even today would confirm the conclusion that, this site must have been a natural water reservoir for thousands of years past. The Vedic and Buddhist traditions of holiness attached to this site and the lake suggest an earlier and more ancient origin of this attachment, extending back to the third and second millennia of the Indus Valley civilization, on the basis of the historical trend that once a holy place, always so and that, a new holiness must be grounded in some older one.

The creative imagination, therefore, is justified in discerning grounds for the belief, not altogether fanciful, that the holy lake and the site of the Golden Temple, was ancient centre of theophanic human activity, at the dawn of human civilization, round about 5,000 years ago peopled by the Mohenjodaro race, and further, that it was an equally well revered spot for the theomatic *rishis* of the Vedas.

It is interesting to recall here that when Guru Arjun was having ancient alluvium of this lake cleared, a sealed masonry subterranean dome was sounded and exposed, which on being opened up revealed a macerated *yogi* in lotus posture, immersed in seedless *nirbija*, trance. When the Guru re-animated him, he disclosed that he went into his trance "thousands of years ago", with the object of experiencing the somatic touch of the Nanak, before entering into the utter Void.

This spot was commemorated by the Guru by the subsidiary lake, Santokhsar, which stands till today. Were some of the Vedic hymns actually revealed to the Aryans at the banks of this ancient holy lake, just as the major portions of the Guru Granth in the 17th century were? Intuitive imagination guesses so, and there is no good reason to think otherwise. In the early centuries of the Christian era, when the oecumenical religion of the Mahayan took birth in the North West India in the form of the original *prajnaparnlitta* and the *sadharmapundrika sutras*. the Golden Temple site and the holy lake were already an active centre of beehive Buddhist monk-communities, of which the great Nagarjuna and Aryadeva themselves might have been the abbots, during the periods of

their creative activity, and if herein the intuitive imagination hovers near the truth, then it emerges that the site of the Golden Temple and the banks of its surrounding waters are the scenes of earliest spiritual activity of the civilized man, the highest watermark of the theomancy of the Vedic Aryans, the greatest achievement of the Buddhist mind and the most glorious efflorescence of the *genius loci* of the Punjab.

Coming to near modern history and times, the founder of the Lamaist Buddhism in Tibet, Padamsambhava, Professor at Nalanda University who was invited to Tibet by the great King. Khri-sron-ide-btsan (745-797) in 747 A.D is the patron-saint of Tibet and one of the greatest figures of Buddhism and he is called, 'Lotus born', to signify his theomorphic status, while his biographies unanimously agree that the 'Lotus' out of which he took his non-human birth, floated on the limpid waters of a sacred lake, which is identified as now surrounding the Golden Temple. To this day, devout Tibetans make long and hazardous journeys to visit and pay homage to this sacred spot of the marvellous origination of the Guru Rimpoche, the previous Master.

If many of these surmises lack palpable root and material evidence, the fact does not render the intangible pull of this picture on the racial subconscious mind, any the less potent, and, indeed, the circumstance multiplies this potency manifold, as keen students of religious psychology well know.

Such a site, surcharged with such ancient and potent spiritual influences it was that the Sikh Gurus chose as the centre of the new world-religion and world-culture, which they inaugurated and instinctively sensing its high spiritual potency in relation to the future of mankind, the Sikhs, during the last 250 years, that the secular state powers, in utter discard and blind ignorance of the implications of the Sikh doctrines have tended to regard this geographical spot as just another area subject to their political domain, have paid the highest price demanded of them in vindication of the true theo-political status of the Golden Temple.

The second reason, therefore, which fortifies the basic Sikh attitude concerning the theo-political status of the Golden Temple is grounded in the nimbus of the Sikh history that hangs over it and provides guiding precedents to the Sikh mind.

Till the demise of Guru Gobind Singh, the Nanaks, the Sikh Gurus, were centres of the Sikh movement, and afterwards, Banda Singh Bahadur took over the command of their political affairs. It was after the execution of Banda Singh Bahadur and the collapse of the Sikh sovereignty which he had established on the political plane, that the Sikhs, collectively assumed the rights and duties of their doctrine of Double Sovereignty, and in 1721 Bhai Mani Singh was installed as the head priest of the Golden Temple, who immediately took steps to revive the true theo-political status of this place. A free community kitchen for the visitors and the disabled was started and politico-civic activities of the Sikh people were gathered afresh to be rooted around the Golden Temple. Khushwaqt Rai, the author of the manuscript, *Tarikh-i-Sikhan*, (1811) says that at this period, the Sikhs lived in caves and thorny bushes, and subsisted on roots and blades of grass, and Zakriya Khan, the military governor of the Punjab, wondered that the "grass-eaters should be so bold as to lay claim to sovereignty." (Folio 446).

MUGHAL CONCEDED THE STATUS OF SUB-NATION TO SIKHS

In 1733, when the Mughal government found that extreme measures of persecution had failed to persuade the Sikhs to compromise their basic doctrines and attitudes they conceded to the Sikhs the status of a sub-nation, an autonomous political status, analogous to that offered to the Sikhs in early 1947 by Mr. Jinnah of the Muslim League. A revenue grant of a hundred thousand rupees and the letters patent of the Nawab were conferred upon the Sikhs, which they accepted

with the reservation that, "the Khalsa meant to rule freely cannot accept permanently, a sub-ordinate position." (Teg Singh, Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, Orient Longmans, (1950), Vol. I, p. 121). All these developments took place and were finalized within the precincts of the Golden Temple, in front of the *Akal Takht* and further, these arrangements show that the government of the day, even during those early days of Sikh history, fully appreciated that the Sikh doctrine envisage that the state must deal with them as one people, and not by atomising them into individual citizens. Immediately, at the conclusion of these arrangements the Sikhs proceeded to establish five military cantonments, one at the lake of the Golden Temple and the other four, the remaining four sacred tanks that constitute the adjunct of the Golden Temple the Ramsar, the Bibeksar, the Lachhmansar and the Kaulsar. These arrangements, by their very nature, were doomed to failure and consequently, in 1736, the Mughal government authorities occupied the Golden Temple and its precincts and it was under these circumstances that, Bhai Mani Singh approached the authorities for permission to celebrate the Sikh consortium of *Diwali* in November, 1736 and he undertook to pay a sum of Rs. Five thousand to the state for police arrangements, on the explicit condition that the Government would not interfere, directly or indirectly, in the right of the Sikhs to collect at the Golden Temple, in complete freedom. Since the government authorities deliberately broke the terms of the agreement and, as is the invariable custom of governments, accused Bhai Mani Singh of having done instead. Bhai Mani Singh accepted the penalty of death inflicted by hacking his body into bits, limb by limb, rather than agree to pay the stipulated amount of Rs. five thousand or earning a reprieve otherwise.

The next year, 1739, saw the invasion of India by the terrible Nadir Shah who sacked Delhi, put its inhabitants to sword and took away the peacock throne and the *kohi-noor* diamond, as loot in his haversack. It was the "grass-eater's

the Sikhs alone, out of all the peoples of India, who then came out of their caves and thorny bushes to attack the rear of the returning invader, till he reached Lahore, exhausted by this harassment, and the following conversation is recorded by a contemporary, between Nadir Shah and Zakriya Khan, the military governor of Punjab :

Nadir Shah : "Who are these mischief-makers, any way ?"

Zakriya Khan : "They are a group of vagabond mendicants who visit their Guru's tank twice a year and then disappear."

Nadir Shah : "Where do they live ?"

Zakriya Khan : "Their homes are their horse-saddles."

Nadir Shah : "Take care, my son, the day is not distant when these rebels will take possession of thy country."

THE SIKHS AVENGE PROFANITY OF THE GOLDEN TEMPLE

Here again, it was recognized by all concerned that, the Golden Temple is the hub of the Sikh universe. After its occupation by governmental in 1736, the Temple and its adjuncts were put to profane secular use and were converted into central offices of the district officer, Mussal-hul-din, popularly known as *Massa Ranghar*. When the news of this profane secular use of the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Golden Temple reached a group of Sikh refugees in the far off Jaipur, two of them travelled all the way to Amritsar, after taking a solemn vow that they would either cut off and bring back to Jaipur the head of this arrogant government official, or never return alive at all. In early August, 1740, this presumptuous government functionary was beheaded on the spot, during the early office hours, and his head was carried to the assembled Sikhs at Jaipur, in vindication of the Sikh doctrine of Double Sovereignty, with the Golden Temple as its acropolis.

The Sikh people thus lived a precarious existence, as

stateless outlaws and aliens in their own homeland, when in 1746, Lakhpat Rai, a Hindu Dewan or Chief Minister of the military Governor of the Punjab took it into his head to oust the herod Herod, to display greater zeal even than the Mughals to destroy the Sikhs and Sikhism besides ordering a genocide of the Sikhs, caused it to be, "announced with the beat of drums that no one should read the Sikh scriptures, anyone taking the name of the Guru should be arrested and his belly ripped open. Even the word, *gur*(molasses) which sounded like Guru was not to be uttered but the word *ror* was to be used instead. The word *granth* was also to be replaced with, *Pothi*. Many volumes of the holy *Granth* were collected and thrown in rivers and wells. The tank of the Amritsar was filled with earth."

(*A Short History of the Sikhs*, op. cit. Vol I, p. 13)

It is not to be supposed that a man of the keen intelligence of his race and an energy peculiar to that by a subordination position inspired the chief minister Lakhpat Rai would have missed the central significance of the Golden Temple and its adjuncts in the Sikh scheme of things, and therefore, where he strove to destroy the cultural roots of the Sikhs. He did not neglect the Golden Temple in view of its theo-political status.

In March 1748, the Sikhs emerged from their hideout and drove away the occupation forces from the Golden Temple, built a mudfort to defend it, and reiterated that the Sikh people were an indivisible entity and sovereign *in genereis*. (Giani Gian Singh, *Panthprakash*, Vartak. Delhi 1892: 907).

In full realization that, in the plains of Amritsar, neither their fighting strength nor the flimsy protection of mud-walls could save them from sure destruction by the Mughals, they resolved that, "no better death is conceivable for a Sikh than that which overtakes him while defending the great cause of Sikhism at this centre of Sikhism." (Rattan Singh, *Bhang prachin panthprakash*. (1837). Amritsar, 1914 p. 325). It must

always be borne in mind that this "Great Cause" is essentially theo-political in content and not merely sorteriological, in the scheme of peculiar Sikh values, a position which is not correctly appreciated by those who honestly castigate Sikhs for mixing up politics with religion.

In 1749, the Sikhs cleared the holy lake of Amritsar of the debris with which it was gutted by the chief minister Lakhpat Rai, and in 1757, the Afghan conqueror, Ahmedshah Abdali, invaded India for the fourth time when he found, as before, that the Sikhs, of all peoples of India, resented his incursions into their country the most and made no secret of this resentment. Well understanding the theo-political status of the Golden Temple and its adjuncts, the redoubtable Abdali, had the temple demolished, its adjuncts destroyed and its lakes filled up and ploughed over, a strange precursor of the Second World war Morgenthau plan of the Allies, calculated to eviscerate culturally and industrially the German people. The Sikhs, however, refused to be cowed down and in April 1758, when the combined forces of the Marathas and the Sikhs had succeeded in driving out of the country the Afghan occupation forces, the Golden Temple was rebuilt and its holy lake cleared up, through the labour of the enemy prisoners of war and under the direct supervision of the famous Maratha chiefs, Raghunath Rao and Malhar Rao Holkar, who then humbly made an offering of Rs One hundred twenty-five thousand at the Golden Temple and received ceremonial robes of honour from its head priest. These Maratha chiefs well understood that restoration of the true theo-political status of the Golden Temple was an integral part of their grand national project of regaining liberty of the people and the freedom of India.

In November, 1760, the Sikhs again assembled before the Akal Takht, at the Golden Temple and declaring themselves as the *Sarbat Khalsa*, a Sikh theo-political doctrine, by which the Sikhs assume the powers and status of the Centralized conscience and will of the people, resolved to take possession of Lahore, the seat of the Punjab government, a project delayed

somewhat by the fifth invasion of the Abdali, the same year.

SIKHS RESCUE HINDU WOMEN FROM HORDES OF ABDALI

Abdali crushed the Marathas as an all-India power in the historic battle of Panipat, fought on January 14, 1761, but when the victorious invader was returning to Afghanistan, the Sikh chiefs again assembled at the Golden Temple and resolved to take all possible measures to rescue the Hindu and Maratha young women being carried away as war booty by the Afghans. In pursuance of this resolution the Sikhs made a determined attack on the rear of the foreigner at the Gobindwal ferry of River Bias, and rescued over two thousand young women from the clutches of the Abdali and made arrangements to return them to their original homes.

(James Browne, *History of the Origin and Progress of the Sikhs*, London, 1778, Vol II, p. 22)

This process of rescuing young women, the Sikhs followed, till the invader crossed the River Jhelum, and the whole campaign was considered resolved upon and sustained from the Golden Temple and its precincts.

ABDALI'S VENGEANCE ON SIKHS

In 1762, the Abdali returned to India on his sixth invasion with the specific object to liquidating the Sikhs completely and finally, of destroying their cultural and spiritual roots and of extirpating their very memory from the minds of the people so that there remains then, no power in India, cherishing the temerity of opposing him. In a lightning attack, this greatest generals that Asia has produced, the Abdali put to sword a large portion of the Sikh people, men, women, and children over thirty thousand of them, near Ludhiana, took possession of the two original volumes of the holy *Granth*, prepared by Nanak V and Nanak X, and then proceeded to complete his task by blowing up the Golden Temple with gun powder.

destroyed its other adjuncts and filled the holy lake, after desecrating in "with the blood of cows."

(*A Short History of the Sikhs, op.cit.*, Vol I, p. 171)

The Abdali, knowing fully well the theo-political significance of the Golden Temple, had these operations carried out under his personal supervision, as a consequence of which he was wounded on the nose by a flying brick- piece on April 10, 1762, which wound remained a festering incurable sore till he died of it, on October 16, 1772, at Toba Marufin the Suleman hills of Afghanistan.

The Abdali, however had stayed in the Punjab, throughout the year 1762, and on 17th October, 1762, more than sixty thousand Sikhs assembled at the ruins of the Golden Temple to challenge and chastise the Abdali for the arrogant sacrilege he had committed. Offers of peace and negotiations made by the Abdali were contemptuously and summarily rejected by the Sikhs and they inflicted a signal defeat on him and force him to retire towards Lahore, and thus the Sikhs sought to vindicate theo-political status of the Golden Temple. Charat Singh, the grand-father of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, was then placed in charge for restoring and rebuilding the Golden Temple and its holy lake.

It was on April 10, 1763, when the Sikhs, as usual had assembled at the Golden Temple in their bi-annual concourse that :

"Some Brahmins of Kasur came and complained against the Afghan inhabitants of their city, especially against the grandee. Uthman Khan, who had forcibly carried away the wife of one of them and converted her to Islam. Hari Singh Bhangi volunteered to help the aggrieved Brahmins, and being supported by Charat Singh, after making a theo-political resolution, *gurmata* led an expedition against Kasur. Uthman Khan with five hundred of his men was killed and the Brahmin lady was restored to her husband."

(Ghulam Mohayudin, *Twarikh-i-Punjab*. Persion Ms. 1848)

also. *A Short History of the Sikhs, op.cit.*, Vol I, p. 174)

In October, 1764, Ahmed Shah Abdali, invaded India for

the seventh time, and on December 1, 1764 he paid a military visit to the Golden Temple to satisfy himself that the Sikhs no longer used this spot for "political activities". He found the Sikhs standing guard at the entrance gate of the Golden Temple, under the captaincy of Jathedar Gurbakhsh Singh, whose mausoleum still stands behind the Akal Takht. "There were only thirty in number. But they had not a grain of fear about them. They were resolved to sacrifice their lives for the Guru", tells us Muslim eye-witness the author of the *Jangnam* (1766, page 100).

On April 10, 1765, after the return of the Afghan invaders, the Sikhs again assembled at the Golden Temple and took a political decision to occupy Lahore, as the seat of the Government of the Punjab and from that day till 1850, the Golden Temple and the Government of the Punjab with other territories remained under the Sovereign dominion of the Sikhs. The Golden Temple and its adjuncts, even during the Sikh Raj, retained their theo-political autonomy and the writ of the Maharaja Ranjit Singh did not run within its precincts.

BRITISH DEVICE OF MANAGING THE GOLDEN TEMPLE

In 1850 the British masters of the Punjab took over the Golden Temple and its adjuncts under their direct administrative control and till the conclusion of the First World War, its theo-political status was maintained and superficially respected through a fiction and a device, in which the Sikhs willy-nilly acquiesced, after their failure to dislodge the British in more than one attempt. The fiction assiduously cultivated was that the British were the allies of the Khalsa, came to Asia in fulfilment of a prophecy of Guru Nanak, to prepare ground for the eventual victory of the Sikh cause of Sikhism, that of fostering a world-culture by establishing a universal society. The device was of managing the ceremonial and services of the Golden Temple and

adjuncts through a government-appointed Sikh manager, a kind of arrangement which the British rulers of India seemed to aim at, but without the accompanying fiction. This arrangement broke down, when at the time of Jallianwala massacre in 1919, the British made the mistake of seeking to use the theo-political status of the Golden Temple in approve of the action of General Dyer. The Sikhs rose as a body against this un-Sikh-like subversion of the true status of the Golden Temple, and the Akali movement into which this Sikh resentment took shape, eventually succeeded in wresting the possession and management of the Golden Temple from out of the British hands, who by a statue passed in 1927, handed over not only the Golden Temple, but also other Sikh historical shrines in the Punjab to a democratically elected body of the Sikhs, the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee and this committee still retains its rights and privileges, thus won.

Throughout the remaining British period till 1947, the Sikhs zealously guarded the theo-political status of the Golden Temple and throughout, never hesitated to assert their right to use it and its precincts for the integrated Sikh activities of a theo-political character. Those into whose hands has now passed the power of running the Government of India, not only upheld this right of the Sikhs so to use the Golden Temple; but they have, on numerous occasions, themselves so employed these precincts.

MAHATMA GANDHI HAILS THE SIKHS VICTORY

When in 1921 the British India Government, through their official representative, handed over the keys of the Golden Temple to Baba Kharak Singh, the veteran Sikh leader, Mahatma Gandhi sent him the following telegram:

"Congratulations. The first decisive battle of Indian freedom has been won."

Mahatma Gandhi well knew, not only all about the theo-political status of the Golden Temple, but also knew and

recognized that it was the centre of a world-movement for a universal culture and a united world- government, and thus it was basically integrated to the *weltanschauung* of Indian freedom, which later he refused to consider as a mere national independence from foreign rule.

INDIA GOVERNMENT'S UMBRAGE

It was only after 1947 that these politicians and men in power took umbrage at the Sikh's desire to continue in enjoyment of their basic and historic rights pertaining to the true status of the Golden Temple and as their repeated attempts to obtain control of the Golden Temple and other Sikh shrines, through their party men, the Congressite Sikhs have been on every occasion foiled by a wide-awake and resentful Sikh electorate. Their anger and their objections against the Sikhs taking the true theo-political status of the Golden Temple seriously, have mounted. It is now asserted that the Sikhs in some way transgress against the Holy Ghost and act treasonably by employing the Golden Temple and its precincts for the purpose, for which they have always been employed and for which they were intended from the very beginning. A grievance is loudly made out that the Sikhs, that is, such Sikhs who do not fall in line with the ruling party, mix up the profane with the sacred and thus injure the interests of the Sikh religion about which their own solicitude is claimed to be greater than of the Sikhs themselves. Be that as it may, it must be granted that, the claims that the Sikhs make and the practices in which they indulge, have no element of novelty in them, for, they are in accord with their past history and traditions, their beliefs and their doctrines and therein they are neither guilty of insubordination nor of recalcitrance in relation to those who today yield the power of state, and if they displease and irritate, the fault lies not in their present temper or understanding but in their spiritual constitution

and historical psycho-mental make up and that for which no individual is responsible, no individual can be blamed in fairness.

What is the third reason, the psychopathic and historical besides, which accounts for the present Sikh problem, which is again and again concretised around the theo-political status of the Golden Temple ?

It has been said earlier that, it arises out of the peculiar doctrinal position of the Sikhs, out of which this theo-political status of the Golden Temple stems. This doctrinal position must eventually be traced to their view of the ultimate reality and the way it has been interpreted in relation to the historical process through which the Sikh movement has passed. Sikhism does not recognize any ultimate dichotomy between the real and the unreal, and hence between the sacred and the profane, though it recognizes a distinction between them, difference of immaculation between them. "God is real and all that He createth is likewise real, and there is naught but that He createth it." (Guru Granth, *Gauri, Sukhmani*, v. 235). Sikhism, therefore, enjoins that a religious life must be believed and practised in the socio-political context. "The God is immanent in the human socio-political activity; know this through an understanding of the Word of the Guru" (*Ibid, kanre-ke-var*, III). It is from these premises that the validity of the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Golden Temple, where nothing but the praise of God and meditation upon Him may be made, conjoined to the Akal Takht, where the highest and the most hazardous political deliberations and decisions are frequently taken, arises. This ideological base animates the peculiar meta legal constitution which Guru Gobind Singh finally gave to the Sikh society:

"Previously, the ultimate authority had rested with the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh, however, had abolished the personal Guruship and had vested it in the holy *Granth* to be administered by the Khalsa. The essential features of this

central authority were that it was to be one and that it was to be exercised impersonally."

(*A Short History of the Sikhs*, op. cit., Vol I, pp. 110-11).

CONCLUSION

From this it follows that

(1) The Sikhs, wherever they happen to be in any appreciable numbers, have a right to be dealt with as a civic group and an attempt to atomise this group for exercise of political power over them, constitutes an infringement of this right. The postulate behind this law of Sikh social constitution is that on the socio-political level, the significant unit is the group rather than the individual, for, it is the group which lays down norms of conduct for the individual.

(2) Political subjugation or slavery is incompatible with the basic constitution of Sikh society.

(3) It is the implied right of the Sikhs to assemble freely as such, to consider and deliberate upon any matters, that they may deem as vital to their interests, irrespective of whether these matters are of this world or of the other, and

(4) The Golden Temple, and by analogy, the other Sikh places of worship, have a theo-political status which is not a matter of concession by a political state, but is a right, *sui generis*.

These are the four socio-political doctrines for a way of life, and it is these doctrines which impel a Sikh and the Sikh to abhor personal rule or group-domination.

George Forester in his book, *A Journey from Bengal to England*, London, 1798, p. 294-95 writes:

"From the observation that I have made of the Sikhs they would appear to be a haughty and high-spirited people. Once I travelled in the company of a Sikh Horseman for some days, and though I made to him several tenders of my acquaintance, he treated them all with great reserve and covert sort of disdain. There was no reason to be particular

offended by this *hauteur* towards me, for, he regarded every other person in the same manner. His answer, when I asked him very respectfully, in whose service he was retained, seemed strikingly characteristic of what I conceive to be the disposition of the Sicque Nation. He said in a tone of voice and with a countenance which glowed with and was keenly animated by the Spirit of Liberty and independence, that he disclaimed an earthly master, and that he was a servant of only the Guru on High."

In the Sikh attitude and the Sikh temper, which apparently irritate and anger those who have now come into power, it is well to perceive that the Sikhs are doing nothing merely to obstruct somebody's enjoyment of power. They are made the way they are and they act the way they have always acted, and whether they are to be understood and accommodated or mended and bent, their position should be comprehended clearly, "without obscuring prejudices. If the Sikh masses are used by individuals for ulterior purposes, the individuals do so by paying lip service to the convictions", that the Sikhs hold dear, and if they resentfully and doggedly have refused to lend ear to others, it is because the others, through wilfulness or ignorance, have failed to take note of these convictions. In a democratic society, such as that of India of today, the Sikhs need not encounter any contradiction between their own collective convictions and the requirements of the state of which they owe allegiance. If, therefore, there are frictions, the fault must be found somewhere in the sphere of implementation of true democratic processes and the persons who implement them. A satisfied and properly integrated-to-the-nation Sikh people can be an invaluable and lasting asset to any state, more so to India in the soil and traditions of which they are rooted, just as a frustrated or suppressed Sikh people can be an obvious weakness in the strength of the nation.

SRI GURU GRANTH DARPAN*

Prof. Piara Singh "Padam" is not unfamiliar to the academic fraternity. He has already given to the Punjabi reader about a dozen serious studies on Sikhism and other subjects and the present book, his latest does him credit for the vast canvas he has covered and the meticulous pains he has taken in examining almost every literary, historical and philosophical aspect of the Sikh Scripture. That the Sikh Scripture surpasses almost all world scriptures in the matter of its high literary level, and its unimpeachable authenticity is no longer seriously doubted even by the unsympathetic critic but its depth and vastness of religious dimension has yet to win near-universal recognition by the Community of the learned, and the ignorance about this aspect of the Guru Granth is more dismal and disappointing nearer home than abroad. The estimate of the Sikh Scripture made by the real founder of the Arya Samaj polemics in the Punjab is not Swami Dayanand but Pan'dit Lekh Raj "Musafir" who impudently evaluated the Sikh Scripture as "a compendium of incoherencies and trivia" *Nanak shah faqir ne naya chalaia panth, idhar udhar ki jod kar likh mara ik granth.*

This perverted Judgement persists amongst a section of the Punjab Hindu intelligentsia till today and has polluted and deflected the social and political history of the North of India, for the last one hundred years.

1. Professor Padam's new book, might provide a corrective to the intellectual preconceptions of those who have

* Pre-Publication Review, TSR, October, 1977

not altogether abjured all respect for truth and objectivity.'

2. Though, I heartily agree with the poet, W.H. Auden that a study of the Guru Granth as a merely literary product is worse than profanity and perversity, I still concede that the labours undertaken by Professor Padam are not without high value for particularly those whose religious understanding and sensitivity is not of a very high order.

3. Rabbi Eugene Borrowitz of the world-famous Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion has said that, "Reading of Bible as literature is worse than not reading it at all."

And the poet Auden puts the matter in some-what broader context:

"Thou shalt not be on friendly terms with guys in advertising firms.

Nor speak with such

As read the Bible for its prose

Nor, above all, make love to those

Who wash too much."

Nevertheless the study of the Guru Granth such as professor Padam has now comprehensively prepared, has a high and significant value.

4. The great service that this book of Professor Padam renders to those, Sikhs, in particular, who are confounded by the controversies as to,

(a) Whether the volume of the Sikh Scripture now preserved at Kartarpur and claimed as the original manuscript prepared under the close superintendence of Guru Arjan in the first decade of the 17th century is a genuine document or a fake ?

(b) Whether the newly discovered and flaunted *Bhattavahis*, by our university research scholars and reconstructions of settled Sikh history are authentic documents ?, is to my mind the central contribution of this book.

5. Prof. Padam conclusively shows that the Kartarpur volume of the Guru Granth is a fake and thus he indirectly

supports the historical fact that shrewd students of Sikh history have always suspected or known that the treacherous and wily usurpers of the Sikh sovereignty took great care to destroy or steal away all such holy or hierolatric articles and things suspected of sustaining the mystique of the dreaded Khalsa, and the original volume of the Guru Granth having been destroyed in the Wadda Ghalughara (1762), its substitute in the Lahore fort was irrecoverably destroyed or stolen away by Henry Lawrence in 1848 and the Kartarpur Volume is a fake, pure and simple. Professor Padam rightly points out that in the Kartarpur Volume, the signification, *nishan* of the Sixth Guru (1606-1644) is shown in the List of Subjects, *tatakara*, in the identical handwriting in which the rest of Kartarpur volume is supposed to have been penned down in 1601 AD.

6. As for the *Bhattavahis* they contain genealogies of non-existing bards, mistakenly believed to be mentioned in the Guru Granth such as, *Kalashar*, *Gang*, *Gyand* etc. These words occur in the Guru Granth but not as the proper names of Bhattas, though it was erroneously supposed in the past that they were proper names and not mere substantives or common nouns. The forgerers of the *Bhattavahis*, to make their manuscripts synchronise with these erroneous misunderstanding have given detailed genealogies to fake flesh and blood human beings of historic character. It is obvious, therefore, that to reconstruct Sikh history on the basis of these *Bhattavahis* uncritically or to meet politico-secular demands of others is unforgivable.

7. One may not altogether agree with Prof. Padam in all of his philosophic exegetics or historical interpretations but his book, as a reference compendium and source of detailed information is of immense value.

THE ADMINISTRATION OF 'AMRIT'

The following rules and regulations have received the formal approval of the premier statutory body of the Sikhs for managing the historic Sikh shrines in the Punjab, and they also have the general approval of the theologians, (Head priests of Sikh Seats of Authority called the Throne) and congregations in various parts of India, and other parts of the world, such as Malaysia, Canada, Burma, the U.S.A., and Africa. The *amrit* is administered to a Sikh when he is knighted a Singh—enrolled as a member of the Khalsa—in accordance with the procedure laid down in these rules, which substantially represent procedure formulated and adopted by Guru Gobind Singh on March 30, 1699; when he enrolled the first Five Beloved Ones as the Khalsa.

1. For administering *amrit*, a specially enclosed, separate place should be reserved for the occasion, which is not a public thoroughfare, or otherwise public.

2. The *Guru Granth* should be formally enthroned and opened there with due ceremony and wrapped in ceremonious robes. There should be present at least six Singhs as officiants and all the six must be certified being not guilty of any unexpiated breach of Sikh discipline and formularies. One of these six should sit on the throne in attendance to the *Guru Granth* and the other five should cooperate in preparation of the *amrit*. They all should have had a full bath, including the washing of head-hair, and should be dressed in clean and proper clothes. These Singhs may be either sex, male or female.

3. None of the five, who have to prepare and administer

the *amrit* should be physically defective such as one-eyed, lame, blind, paralytic or suffering from any serious or long standing disease. They should all be of good physique, good health and good bearing.

4. Every sane human being, of adult mind, irrespective of caste, creed, country, climate, race or sex, is entitled to be administered the *amrit*- (whenever he makes such a voluntary request), and to be enrolled into the Brotherhood of the Khalsa.

5. Such a petitioner should have had a full bath, including that of the head-hair, should be neatly and properly dressed, in possession of the five symbols of the Khalsa, uncut hair, comb duly tucked up in the tress knot of the head hair, the iron bangle on the right wrist, a sword in the belt, and a pair of shorts up to the knees. He should wear a turban on his head and stand in front of the *Guru Granth* with due respect.

6. One of these five officiants then should put the following question publicly to the petitioner or each of the petitioners. "Sikhism enjoins love and worship of the One Creator in contradistinction to the creatures. This worship must be implemented through selfless service of humanity and compassion towards all living creatures. Such selfless service and compassion must be inspired by continuous and progressive understanding of the Guru's Word as recorded in the *Guru Granth*, broad-based on the *yogic* discipline of the Name. Holy congregation is the context of this great discipline, and the Khalsa is the Society pledged to propagate and perpetuate this holy Way of Life, through which the Universe shall be blessed in the beginning, shall be blessed in the middle, and shall be blessed in the end, without end and forever. Do you, after due consideration and voluntarily accept this Way of Life?"

7. When the petitioner has answered "I do," then one of the five officiants should perform the congregational prayer, the *ardas*, and the Orders of the *Guru Granth* should be obtained. Then, one of the five officiants should stand up and

addressing the holy congregation in its capacity and the Acting Guru should ask: "Have we the permission of the Guru to prepare and administer *amrit* to the petitioner?" On receiving the assent of the holy congregation, which is usually given by some or all members of the holy congregation saying in unison, "The Guru giveth the permission," all the five officiants, the five beloved ones, who now are transubstantiated into the original Five Beloved Ones to whom Guru Gobind Singh first administered *amrit* on March 30, 1699, and who are now under the miraculous Captaincy of Guru Gobind Singh himself, should sit in a circle on the already appointed place, where a round bowl of pure steel, full of pure water is placed in the centre. In this bowl of water should rest, handle upward, a double-edged sword of pure steel, and sugar puffs or pure sugar should be added to the contents of the bowl. All the five officiants should then assume the hero-posture, which consists of placing the right knee on the ground with its heel forming the stool and seat for the body, while the left knee points heavenwards, and the left toe is firmly planted on the ground. Then all the five officiants should visualise in their minds the archetypal form of Guru Gobind Singh, tall, erect, dark blue clad, wearing an aigrette of pure dazzling gems on his turban, with a white hawk on his left hand and a pure steel lance in his right, fully armed, with a dark blue steed as his vehicle. They should then concentrate their minds within as the tortoise withdraws his limbs underneath his shell. Thus, firmly postured and self controlled, one of the officiants should firmly hold the handle of the double edged sword in his right hand and place the tips of the steel bowl, while the remaining four officiants should place the finger tips of both the hands on the edges of the steel bowl. All the five officiants should fix the gaze of their eyes into the water of the bowl, while the first officiant should then recite the *Jap* of Guru Nanak, all the while stirring the contents of the bowl with the sword. In a similar manner, the *Jaap* of Guru Gobind Singh should then be recited by the second officiant. And then the

Sudha Swayyiyas and then the *Bainti Chaupai* of Guru Gobind Singh and then the *Anand* (first five and the last stanza) of Guru Amar Das should be recited in a similar manner, in a firm and clear voice, by the third, fourth and the fifth officiant respectively. The reciter should keep on stirring the contents of the steel bowl with the double edged sword all the while, as aforementioned.

8. After these recitations are over, the bowl should be covered with a clean cloth, and one of the officiants should carry the bowl in both of his hands, and he should then again lead the congregational prayer, everybody standing facing the throne in which the ratification of God Almighty should be asked for the *amrit* thus prepared.

9. Then the *amrit* should be administered to the petitioners in the following manner. The petitioners or petitioner, should sit in the hero posture in straight line, keeping the throne of the Guru Granth to their right. Then one of the five officiant, should carry the bowl of *amrit* on both hands, and another officiant should dip his right hand into the bowl and pour about an ounce of *amrit* into the cupped right hand of the petitioner, which the petitioner should hold up with the outstretched left hand as its base. The petitioner should then raise his cupped right hand to his lip and drink the *amrit*. While the officiant who poured the *amrit* into his cupped palm, should bid: "Say, The Khalsa is of the Wonderous God, Victory to God" The petitioner should then repeat: "The Khalsa is of the Wonderous God, Victory to God" This process should be repeated five times in the case of each petitioner. Then each petitioner should be required to fix his gaze, with open unwinking eye, into the open unwinking eye, of the *amrit* administering officiant, while the officiant should throw a few drops of *amrit* into the eyes of the petitioner, with some force to cause the shut reflex, and this should be repeated five times accompanied by the bidding and repetition of the formula "The Khalsa is of the Wondrous God, Victory to God", as aforesaid. Then five times, five drops of *amrit* should be

sprinkled into the tress-knot of the hair of the head of each petitioner, again accompanied by the bidding and repetition of the above-mentioned formula. If then some *amrit* is left over, it should be sipped by all the petitioners, one after the other, from the same bowl till it is drained off. All this while, when two officiants are administering *amrit*, one carrying the bowl, the other passing it on, the remaining three officiants should stand two steps behind, in a straight line, facing the petitioners, and in the attention posture.

10. When the *amrit* is thus administered to the petitioner, the two officiants should step back to join the other three officiants and all the five in unison then should say:

Waheguru — Ik omkar sat nam, karta purakh, nirbhau,
nirvair, Akal murat, ajuni, saibhang, gurbarsad.

"Wonderous God, One, Numinous phenomenon, Truth, Name, Creator, Person Without fear, Without malice, Timeless Form, Unborn, Self-existent-subsistent, Light, Through Grace (known)." And the petitioners should then repeat, in unison, the same formula. This should be done five times.

11. Then one of the officiants should address the petitioner or the petitioners thus: "Today you take a new birth in the House of the Guru. You have become a member of the Khalsa Brotherhood. Guru Gobind Singh is the Father and holy Sahib Kaur, the Mother, of the Khalsa Brotherhood. Your Birthplace is the Blessed Fort of the Uncut Hair (*Kesgarh*) and you are a citizen of the Town of Peace (Anandpur). Your previous Caste, race, name, geneology, country, religion, customs and beliefs, your subconscious memories and your personality have today been burnt up and annihilated. Believe it to be so, without a doubt and with whole of your soul. You have become the Khalsa, a sovereign man, today, owing allegiance to no earthly person or power. One God Almighty, the Timeless, is your only sovereign to whom you owe allegiance and He alone is entitled to your devotion and worship. The Way to final fulfilment of human destiny is laid

down in the revelations of the Guru Granth and the teachings of the Ten Gurus. Follow this Way and no other. Learn Gurmukhi if you do not already know it and read or hear, readout and explained, the Guru Granth daily, as far as practicable and recite the five compositions of the Gurus, the first three in the morning, the fourth at sunset, and the last before retiring for the night, viz, the *Jap*, the *Japu*, the ten *Swayyias*, the *Rahiras* and the *Sohila*. Keep intact five symbols of the Khalsa. The five K's on you, the uncut hair (*Kesh*), a comb (*Kangha*); an iron bangle (*Kada*), a sword (*Kirpan*) and short drawers (*Kachha*). Do not commit these four grave breaches of discipline. (1) To trim or shave the hair of the body. (2) To eat Kosher meat or that prepared in a similar manner as by Muslims. (3) To have sexual relationships outside the marital bond and (4) To use tobacco. Any of these grave breaches of discipline results in automatic suspension from the membership of the Khalsa of the culprit and a reinitiation ceremony of *amrit* administration in full is then necessary after penance, for restoration of his original status. Till such re-enrolment, he is *apatit*, a fallen limb of the Brotherhood Association with such of these *patits*, who have committed the first and the last of these four grave offences, is forbidden to the Khalsa, till expiation and reinitiating. Remain ever ready to serve the Khalsa Panth, and through it the whole humanity. Whatever you earn as your livelihood, which must be lawful and through creative effort, one-tenth of it must always be given away to further common weal, to the Central Treasury of the Khalsa and all your life must be lived in a Sikh-like manner, which means the discipline of Name, earning a livelihood through legitimate and creative effort and sharing the fruits thereof with others. Be a disciplined member of the Khalsa always, and if you commit an error, confess it before an assembly of the Khalsa and accept the penance they impose upon you and be careful in future.

12. The following five groups of men are basically hostile to the organisational purity of the Khalsa. Do not enter into

any permanent social relationship with any of them, such as marriage, till the individual duly joins the Khalsa Brotherhood and undertakes to observe its discipline. A disregard of this precept entails culpability (literally, makes a defaulter, a salaried servant).

- i) The *Minas*, the *Dhirmalias*, the *Ramraiya*s, the *Masands*; these, who in the past have tried to create schism in the historical growth of the true Sikh doctrine, and those who become *patits*.
- ii) Those who establish social intercourse of common dining or marriage relationships with such as these.
- iii) Those who dye their hair or use make up, in vanity to appear other than what they are.
- iv) Those who corrupt the institution of marriage by basing it on monetary somatic considerations.
- v) Those who use intoxicants to befog their minds.

Be diligent and remain alert always to maintain your purity.

13. After these instructions have been thus imparted to the petitioner, then one of the officiants should again lead congregational prayer, the *ardas*, and then the 'Orders' of Guru Granth should be obtained as a blessing to and ratification of the due enrolment of the petitioner to the Khalsa Brotherhood, and the first letter of this order should form the first letter of the new name to be given to the petitioner.

14. The sacred food should then be distributed to all present, and all the newly enrolled members should eat the sacred food from a common bowl.

15. The ceremony of Initiation is now over and complete, and the assembly should disperse.

Here are English translations of opening passages from the five compositions which are recited when *amrit* is prepared.

1. **The Japu :** "Absolute-form. Truth. Name. Creator. Person. Without-malafides. Timeless form. Without-birth. Self-

subsistent. Light. Through Grace (realised). The *Japu* (begins). True beyond the flux of Time. True at the commencement of Time-cycles. True within the Time flux and True shall also be, (sayeth) Nanak. By human mind. He cannot be comprehended even though it cogitated a hundred thousand times. Not by suppressing the cogitation doth the human mind reach the Silence (of Self-realisation), even though it achieves single-pointed concentration without disruption. By accumulating the goods of all the worlds, the desire within is not satiated. No amount of profound wisdom or possession of know-how availeth. (Then) how shall man become one with Truth, how shall the veil of illusion be lifted up? Nanak (answers): "Living and acting (in social context), in obedience to the Law of God and His Will, revealed to man through the depths of his heart. This Law createth the archetypal Forms; This Law cannot be stated. This Law createth the life-monads, with the urge to evolve implanted in them. The lower and the higher is determined by this Law, the pleasure and pain is apportioned by this Law to those who enjoy themselves and suffer. By this Law, some receive Grace and others wander about forever. All that is within the compass of the Law. Nanak (explains), he who understands the Law never then says, "I am".

2. **The Jap:** "That which hath neither physical features or peculiarities, nor contour, colour or caste, nor geneology. There is naught to say for anyone, what Its form, what Its complexion, what Its physiognomy and what uniform Stable Entity, the Light *sui generis*, Without Measure, so it be stated. Count countless gods, the kings of gods, earthly kings and their emperors. (And) the lords of a three worlds, the gods, the mortals, and the titans, and these, (together); (Still) every blade of grass beareth witness that "Not that", "Not that." Who can make an all-true proposition (*sarvam*) about Thee. The wise thu

utter adjectival statements (to refer to Thee) Salutation to the Time-less. Salutation to the Compassionate. Salutation to the Formless. Salutation to the Incomparable. Salutation to the One with a persuasion. Salutation to the Measureless. Salutation to the One and Alone. Salutation to the Unborn. Salutation to the Non aggregate. Salutation to the Disintegrate. Salutation to the Nameless. Salutation to the Nonresident. Salutation to the Deedless. Salutation to the Lawless. Salutation to the Descriptionless. Salutation to the Homeless. Salutation to the Un-conquered. Salutation to the Unsurrendered. Salutation to the Unfortified. Salutation to the Undemolished. Salutation to the Spaceless. Salutation to the Non-temporal. Salutation to the Unconsumed. Salutation to the non-aggregate. Salutation to the Disintegrate. Salutation to the Linal. Salutation to the Shoreless. Salutation to the One-alone. Salutation to many. Salutation to the Substanceless. Salutation to the Unyoked".

3. **Sudha Sawaiyyas** : I went to Houses of the *Sravaks*, the *Janamonks*, the True ones, the Siddha-teams, the yogis and the Celebates, the Sun-worshippers, the Heliosophists, the Cleanlivers, and the Puritans, and the saints and anchorites of many persuasions. Throughout the world I saw and scrutinised, but I did not meet anyone with the Religion of the Lord of Life. Without the grace of the Lord of Grace, the Lord God, all sects are worthless.1. The inebriated war-elephants, covered with gold cloth, bedecked with jewels, without a compeer, protected with glittering mail coats. Countless war-steeds, nimble like a deer, and swifter than a gust of wind. And mighty monarchs, as vassals and allies, countless and without number. Such a mighty emperor of men as this, and yet what of it, for in the end he must depart unshod and unclad. 2. They subdued country after country, with bugles blowing and trumpets blaring. Surrounded by herds, of war-elephants uttering proboscidean cries, and

thousands of horses neighing in excitement. Such world-conquerors of the past, present and the future are so numerous as to be countless. Without remembrance of God, all these lords of the earth go in the end to where everything goes in the end."

4. *Bainti Chaupai* : "Protect us with Thy Hand as our shield. May our aims be fulfilled. May our minds rest concentrated at Thy Feet. Sustain us, knowing us to be Thy slaves. 1. Destroy all the evil around us. Save me through Thine own intervention. May those, my allies and dependents, live in felicity. My helpers and my disciples, all of them, O, God. 2. Safeguard me with Thine own Hand. Destroy all my enemies now. May my hope be completely fulfilled. May I ever remain athirst for Thy Love. 3. May I love nought but Thee. May I receive every blessing from Thee alone. Save my helpers and my disciples. Pick out all my ill wishers for destruction. 4. Uplift me with Thine own Hand. Destroy my fear of the hour of Death. Be ever our Support. Lord of the Banners, grant us safe conduct. 5. Protector, protect me, Thou, The Lord, the Guide-saint, the Ally and the Beloved. The Helper of the poor, the Vanquisher of evil. Thou art our Refuge in all the fourteen Regions. 6. *Brahma*, the creator-demiurage, came into being within the ambit of Time. The *Siva* also came to exist within the Time-cycles. The *Vishnu*, the Primordial person, is also encompassed by time. All this phenomena is grounded in Time. 7. The Time, which made Shiva, the Lord of the *yogis*, Which created *Brahma*, the knower of Vedas, The Time, which made all the temporal universes. To that, our salutations. 8. The time that created all the worlds. And created all the goods, the titans and the genii. The Time, which is the same. One in the Beginning and in the End. Verily, that is our Light and Guide. 9. To Him alone we salute. Who hath created all the creatures. He giveth unending joys to his own. He destroyeth them that oppose Him. 10."

5. *Anand Sahib* : "Bretheren, the Light of God is my Guide and peace is in my heart. The Light hath brought Realisation, and my mind is instinct with joy. The gods and goddesses of Music have assembled to make heavenly music of bliss. Sing ye (also) the praises of God, O, servants of God. Nanak sayeth, the peace hath descended into my heart and true Light is my Guide. I. O, heart mine, be with God, ever. Remain with God, O, my heart, and have sorrow and pain no more. He whom God accepts, his problems are solved. Forget not Him, the God Almighty. Nanak sayeth, O, heart mine, remain with God, ever. 2. True Lord, what hast Thou not in Thy House. All, everything is there in Thy House, but he alone receiveth whom thou givest. (Thy greatest gift), the praises and Thy adoration bestow upon us by implanting the Name in our hearts. Where the Name resideth, in that heart the divine Music of the Presence of God is heard too. Nanak sayeth, Thy Lord, what hast Thou not in Thy House.³"

VIEWS ON THE PROPOSED ALL INDIA GURDWARA ACT*

1. In 1925, after a glorious struggle by the Sikhs, the Punjab Government of British India put the Punjab Gurdwaras Act 1925 on the statute. This was intended (1) to bring certain Gurdwaras in the Punjab, enumerated and scheduled, under the direct control of a Statutory Management Board and, (2) this Board was to be elected on Universal franchise on the practices of Anglo-Saxon forms of democracy, i.e. a formal counting of heads for exercising power.

2. This Statute had certain unprecedented and unique features. One was that the Anglo-Saxon type of democracy should apply to the control and management of certain gurdwaras and the second, that this Board was to be autonomous, within prescribed limitation, for all practical purposes.

3. We have now seen and acted upon this statutory scheme for the last half a century and there is almost unanimity of opinion that the working of this statute, under the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, has resulted in some grave consequences, to the detriment of Sikhism and the Sikh community both.

(a) It has imposed on the religious consciousness of the Sikhs the idea that the doctrines and practices of Sikhism are controllable and alterable by brute and ill-informed, non-committed majorities, (b) and that the resources of the gurdwaras, tangible and intangible, primarily the platform

* TSR, February, 1978.

and gatherings of big audiences, might, without scruples, be used as instruments for individual political careers, and to a smaller extent, amassing of private fortunes, and, in addition, a much larger number of places of Sikh worship, the gurdwaras left out of the Schedule of the Punjab Gurdwaras Act have been almost forced into estrangement with Sikhism and the Sikh community. Thousands of such places of Sikh-worship, some of them many centuries old, have been converted into places of non-Sikh worship to save them from the encroachments and onslaughts of those who succeed in getting control of the historical Sikh gurdwaras through electioneering devices and who also succeed in elbowing out intelligent and sensitive Sikhs from taking any active part in the control of these gurdwaras. Gurdwara funds are ill-spent, religion is debased and made expendable and the Sikh community has been denigrated.

4. The *Udasis*, staunch class of Sikh missionaries, who have rendered great services to the cause of spread of Sikhism in the past four or five centuries, in far and wide regions, have been completely estranged from Sikhism and the Sikh people. They have succeeded in getting themselves declared by the judicial courts as non-Sikhs. Thus, they have not only turned their back on the true religion of their spiritual ancestors but have activated themselves to do positive harm and obstruction to the spread of Sikhism, particularly, outside Punjab. Likewise, now *Nirmalas* have succeeded in getting themselves declared by our Supreme Court as non-sikhs and, thus, have not only estranged themselves from their true religion and the Sikh community but have also ceased to operate as preachers and standard-bearers of Sikhism, their only commitment, originally.

5. On the positive side, there are not many gains to be listed. The gurdwaras, the places of Sikh worship, have fallen into the hands of those whose commitment to religion and Sikhism cannot, altogether, be rated as very high. Most of them are illiterate rustics and mobsters and many of them are

plain thugs and Communists whose ultimate objective is to destroy all Religion as an operative factor in Society. It must be conceded though, that there are honourable exceptions on the positive side. We have been able to have an elected Board of Sikh opinion which, under correct and proper leadership and guidance, can evolve into an instrument of great political significance. If this has not so far happened, the fault lies within us and not with the tool which has thus been placed in our hands. That this Management Board, called, SGPC has sometimes gone out of its way to discourage or cold-shoulder genuine Sikh intellect, sensitivity and energy, and to introduce and give birth to highly dangerous and questionable practices which, as the time passes, can be destructive of Sikhism, is not in doubt. For instance, they have recently proclaimed the venerated historical Sikh Gurdwara at Damdama Sahib in Bhatinda District as the Fifth Takht, without having any idea of what a Takht is, what is the doctrine behind these Takhts, how have they historically evolved and whether there can be all be Takhts more than four according to the doctrinal basis of these Takhts. The SGPC did not even pause to consider whether they have any competence to create a new Takht which competence unless made invalid, forthwith, might, in the future, result in creating 11th and 12th Gurus, or changing the written texts of the Sikh scripture, the two most fundamental foundations of the Sikh faith and the Sikh community. The Sikhs must take note of the doctrine of quo-warranto or perjury through religious confusion and chaos.

6. These are the main minus points that have clearly emerged out of the statutory management and control of our historical gurdwaras and the plus side of the matter has practically remained in desuetude. The conclusion is that, the statutory control of our gurdwaras has been, by and large, a curse and not a blessing, even in disguise, and its continuation poses a serious danger to Sikh viability and interests. If we were to proceed from this premise alone, the conclusion becomes inevitable that the Punjab Gurdwaras Act 19

should be scrapped altogether instead of being extended to the whole of India even in principle, because the greater the quantity of poison the more fatal it becomes, irrespective of its potency for good.

ਬਿਖੁ ਮਹਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਸਿੰਚੀਐ ਬਿਖੁ ਕਾ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 1244)

7. But such a step is not possible because those who are now in control of the gurdwaras will oppose it bitterly in vested self interests if for no other reasons, and they are the only people who are in control of the Sikh organised opinion at the moment. The question will immediately arise then, as to what to do next. Shall we let the gurdwaras be taken over by the local people everywhere and, thus, destroy the apparent organisation and unity which the existence of SGPC has given us? Shall we have a Trust instead which is self-perpetuating and statutory, likely to become stagnant and mechanical?

8. There is no conclusive answer to these fundamental questions and the matter is better considered on the basis of doctrines, which should be adapted to our present requirements.

9. There are two or three well-established Sikh doctrines about which there is no reasonable dispute and which cannot be ignored in the matter of management of our gurdwaras.

10. The first doctrine is that, in theory, all Sikh places of worship which are tied up with the general Sikh History and traditions, are the property of the panth, i.e. the collectivity of the Sikhs. About this doctrine there has been no dispute whatever from the very beginning. Such gurdwaras are indisputably the property of the Panth. In 1721 A.D. When a quarrel arose between the Bandei faction of the Sikhs and the 'Tat' Khalsa Sikhs, as to who should take charge of our central gurdwara, Harimandar Sahib, at Amritsar, Bhai Mani Singh, appointed by Mata Sundri herself as the Chief Granthi, persuaded the assembled Sikhs to leave the matter to sortology or decision by lots to be controlled by the will of the

Guru. Two pieces of paper, with different texts on them signifying the two factions, were thrown into the holy *Sarovar* after *ardas* and it was agreed that the paper which floats up to the surface of the waters first, shall be deemed as the true representative of the Panth. Rattan singh Bhangu tells us that the agreement was that, *jis ki chitthi aap hi pehle upar ae, wohi sachhi panth maalak bane sabh gurdwarian kae.* (ਜਿਸ ਕੀ ਚਿੱਠੀ ਆਪ ਹੀ ਪਹਿਲੇ ਉਪਰ ਆਏ, ਵੋਹੀ ਪੰਥ ਮਾਲਕ ਬਣੇ ਸਭਿ ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰਿਆਂ ਕੇ ।) It is, therefore, clear that the gurdwaras of historical origin and of traditional sanctity, on which centre strong religious sentiments of the entire Sikh community, must somehow, pass to the management and control of the Sikh community as a whole.

Secondly, the Sikh practices and the doctrines, going back to the epiphany of Sikhism, make it clear that this control and management of the gurdwaras is not to be centralised and the local Sikh congregations or *sangats* must have a decisive voice in the control and management of these gurdwaras.

11. In the background of these two doctrines, we want a statute which, under the present circumstances, can only cover India, that is Bharat, though we have many important gurdwaras and places of worship outside India also. A wholly centralised control over the financial matters and over the day-to-day routine of the gurdwaras is not only opposed to the genuine Sikh doctrines and our pristine practices but is also fraught with many dangers.

This, then, is (1) the first basis which I should suggest for the formulation of an All India Gurdwaras Act in recognition of the right of the Panth to collective ownership of its gurdwaras and the right of local *sangats* to exercise decisive control in their management.

The other (2) principle which must govern the provision of the proposed All India Gurdwaras Act is that there should be some in-built mechanism, not coercive but persuasive which can bring about uniformity of genuine Sikh rituals at all the important places of Sikh worship.

The third principle, (3) which comes to our attention with

a great deal of compulsiveness is that, it should be statutorily provided that any person who offers himself for election for the management and control of gurdwaras, whether at the centre or at local places, must be debarred completely and decisively from seeking or accepting an elective position in Legislative Assemblies and the Parliament of the country as well as other elective bodies. The idea is that the political adventurers, and those cherishing such ambitions, should be kept altogether away from control and management of our gurdwaras in any direct capacity or form. Without this, it is impossible to retrieve the great damage which has already been done to the Sikh religious consciousness and the graver danger which the current situation poses for the future of Sikhism.

Fourthly, (4) some minimum qualifications for those who come forward for management and control of gurdwaras should be there, not only prescribed educational and other qualifications but also they must be *amritdhari* Sikhs, for only such have the right to control and manage Sikh places of worship in a representative capacity, though the *sahajdhari* Sikhs and other genuine Sikhs, called *Nanak-Panthis*, such as *Udasis*, *Nirmalas*, *Sewapanthis*, etc. have a clear right of vote and expression of opinion. There is nothing new or extraordinary in this suggestion because it is the original Sikh tradition. Guru Gobind Singh himself, we are told, laid down that, '*Sangat kini Khalsa*', which means that the Sikh community is spearheaded by the *amritdhari* Sikhs. It is not the Anglo-Saxon form of democracy which is suited to our traditions and genius but it is the true and genuine democracy of Sikhism, the elitist democracy of the conception of Guru Gobind Singh, operating through consensus and *gurmata* instead of counting of heads and show of hands. This should be restored and vigorously applied to all future processes for the management of Sikh gurdwaras.

Fifth, (5) Positive and genuine efforts must be made to reclaim *Udasis* and *Nirmalas* and other such classes who have

been estranged from Sikhism on the simple ground that they could not accept and reconcile to the loss of properties attached to institutions under their original control. These people, in most cases, created these institutions and properties with own efforts and there is no good reason why, now, anybody else should deprive them of these properties and their traditional privileges.

If this is ensured, it should be possible, through patience and tact, to bring these people and classes back to the common fold of the Sikh Community and this can be done by providing a statutory guarantee that the control of properties and institutions with such persons and classes of Sikhs shall, under no circumstances, be encroached upon and that the Central Body of the All India Gurdwaras Act will give them whatever assistance is possible by way of finances, guidelines and legitimate and moral support under all circumstances. This step is even more important than securing statutory management of the Sikh gurdwaras in the whole of India for our elected bodies. The question that some Privy Councilor Supreme Court has declared some classes of Sikhs as "non-Sikhs" should be treated as a political manoeuvre and null and void in relation to the spiritual bond between an individual and the Guru.

12. In conclusion, I would say that, the All India Act must be based on the following principles:

1. It is desirable and acceptable that there should be an All India Gurdwaras Act.
2. The financial control and management of such gurdwaras, as come within the purview of this Act, must not be centralised but federalised and decentralised, the effective power vesting in the local *sangats*, according to the true Sikh tradition hallowed by the Gurus themselves.
3. The Principle that only the *amritdhari* Sikhs, i.e., the Khalsa, has the obligation, the duty and the prerogative to spearhead the management of historical and traditionally significant Sikh gurdwaras must be accepted but this principle should not be statutorily applied to

- such places of Sikh worship as are not of historical or traditional importance. This should cover also the Sikh places of worship established by *Udasis*, *Nirmalas* and other individuals or classes of Sikhs or Nanakpanthis.
4. Those wishing to assume statutory responsibility for the management of our gurdwaras must, finally and altogether, abandon personal political ambition, otherwise, our whole religion will be debased and politicalised, and we cannot afford any further debasement of this great World Religion.
 5. Minimum educational, and other suitable qualifications must be statutorily prescribed.
 6. The local bodies to administer our gurdwaras might be structured on the basis of direct franchise, subject to the limitations afore-mentioned, and the Central body, i.e. the SGPC which has great potentialities for political prestige and future of the Sikhs, might be based upon indirect election on a two or three tier basis through electoral colleges.
 7. *Sehejdharis*, *Udasis*, *Nirmalas* and all such Nanak-Panthis must be, by suitable statutory requirements, associated with the Central Board of the proposed Act, in particular, and local gurdwara-committees in general, through the device of nomination and not election, and in order to make their association effective and meaningful they must be empowered and enabled to function as non-voting members with the right to have their dissenting opinion or advice recorded in the official gurdwara gazettes for public information, so that the weight of their moral prestige becomes heavier than a mere mechanical and empty voting right.
 8. The status and position of the *jathedars* of the four Sikh Takhts must be statutorily so ensured that their opinions and official conduct is in nowise subordinated to or compromised by any Board or Committee in control of statutory gurdwaras.

9. The questions of basic Sikh doctrines and institutions must be specifically removed from the purview or powers of the Central Board, or the Committees contemplated under the All India Gurdwaras Act, leaving such questions to be settled by general discussion and expert persuasion of the Sikh *sangats* and Sikh *budhivans*, through *gurmata*s and over all consensus of the Sikhs, as is the true Sikh tradition and the age-old practice of non-priestly religions of the World.
10. Specific Provisions might be made in the All India Act for voluntary accession of Sikh gurdwaras, not originally contemplated as controllable under the Act, to be so controlled in India, and in the case of those gurdwaras or places of Sikh worship situated outside India, to be loosely associated with the Central Board, for purpose of superintendence and guidance, subject to the political laws obtaining in the respective countries in relation to such Sikh institutions.
11. I suggest that these submissions made by me may be given due consideration when making recommendation for the proposed All India Gurdwara Bill.

THE REPUBLIC OF INDIA AND SIKH POLITY*

It was the learned Dr. K.P. Jayaswal, who in his famous book, *Hindu Polity*, lent respectability to the crude notion that the type of political society which the Sikh Gurus formed was devoid of any coherent principles of polity. In chapter 38, at page 351 of the Third and Enlarged Edition of his book, the learned Dr. Jayaswal said that,

“the Sikhs, as a polity failed, because they could not connect themselves with the past.”

It was this taunt that instigated the writer of these lines to write-up a whole chapter on the subject of Sikh Raj in his English book, *Parashar-prasana*, explaining that the Sikh polity as conceived and set forth by the Sikh Gurus, is by far the most modern, and that, it is integrally related to the principles of the Vedic Society of our ancestors. It was further argued in this book that, it was not the Sikh polity, as such, that failed, but those who either did not understand it or did not have the courage and high character to accept it. It was tried to be shown further, by reference to authorities and historical material that, the Sikh political experiment has received a set back, precisely, for the reason that Sikh polity was sabotaged by those to whom the Sikh doctrines were basically uncongenial, and the Brahminic tradition of Hindu monarchy the only true polity.

It will not be practicable to go over the entire involved argument of this book at this place except to refer to one

* TSR, October, 1978.

conclusion in it, namely, that the Union of the Republic of India, which the free people of India have now set up, enshrines in it certain basic principles, that are wholly in accord with that of Sikh policy of the Guru.

One of them is its acceptance of a Plural Society as politically valid, and the other, its assent to principles of Secularism in a special sense.

The Secularism of the Indian Union is not the secularism of one who considers that the religion is wholly irrelevant for purposes of politics. Indian secularism is essentially the faith that sectarian dogmas of religion and so called religious laws of social organisation are not to be the final criteria for the conduct of political affairs in modern India. Acceptance of a Plural Society, is, in a way, a corollary of secularism, for, a Plural Society is one in which multiplicity of cultures and its modes of expression, such as language and personal law, is not considered as antagonistic to national solidarity.

Now, secularism in this peculiar sense has always been in accord with the spirit of Hindu Society from ancient times. As we know, Hindu Society is a complete Society and self-sufficient Society, but it is also a Society which is tolerant of those falling outside its social circle, Harihar II, the Maharajadhiraj of the Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar (1377-1404) issued a royal edict, recently discovered inscribed on copper plates, laying down that in his Hindu Empire, officially and solemnly dedicated to the local manifestation of Siva, the Virupaksha, "all religions, all peoples, all communities, and all cultural forms, are entitled 'to equal protection and patronage by the State.'" It is this tradition of secularism which is sought to be carried out by the secularism of our Republic, and it is this kind of secularism which accepts a Plural Society as a natural and the only civilised form of political societies.

It is this strain which marks Hindus off from all those peoples and societies that insist on monolithic totalitarianism of social and political uniformity.

It is this strain of the polity of our ancestors which was

not only firmly accepted but which was elaborated and sanctified by the Sikh Gurus as the true basis of Politics for Mankind.

Mahakavi Santokh Singh in his Hindi Magnum Opus, *Gurpratap Suraj Granth*, says in praise of Guru Gobind Singh : "If Guru Gobind Singh had not descended on to this mortal plane of earth from the Heavenly regions, the greatest of the calamities that would have befallen mankind, would have been the clamping of monolithic social order in India, and the concept of a Plural Society would have become a thing of the past."

Now, that we can consider the whole question from a perspective which was not available to our ancestors, we are persuaded that the judgement of the Mahakavi was a most profound judgement on the significance of Sikh Gurus in relation to the evolution of Hinduism in its impact upon the institutions of the modern mankind.

By the time Islam had reached the threshold of India, it was already a mixture or an alloy fused from Semitic, Hellenic, Persian and Arabic elements. By then, the various components of this Islamic civilisation were already long familiar to one another and had inter-acted on to each other through thousands of years of trade and conquest. The Caliph of Baghdad, was in every essential respect, the heir to Alexander and Xerxes, to Nebuchednezzar and Solomon, but when the still unformed and molten Society of Islam started an invasion and gradual conquest of India, it found itself in increasingly intimate contact with something largely alien, the highly complex Hindu world. This Hindu world was itself an amalgam, but the one which had long since crystallised out into well shaped static forms. The superiority in war strategy and weapons of the new invaders afforded them a tremendous advantage over the host Society, but when this advantage was sought to be turned into an instrument for clamping upon the host Society, a monolithic social pattern of Islamic Society, it gave birth to a tremendous upheaval in the Hindu soul, and

this was natural as it would have been, for the Muslim invaders left no alternative to the Hindu Society except that of rebellion. Alberuni's judgement in his objective book, *Kitab-ul-Hind* was fundamentally correct, wherein he says: "We (Muslims) believe in nothing in which they (Hindus) believe and they believe in nothing in which we do." The polity and way of life taught by the Sikh Gurus furnishes a solution to the problem arising out of this tremendous impact, which is portrayed in a Tamil composition of the early 14th century and which laments:

"The foul smell of roasted flesh and fierce noise of the ruffianly Turkish soldiers has replaced the sweet sacrificial smoke, and the rivers are red with the blood of the slaughtered cows."

Let us try to have a peep into the nature of this monolithic Society which was sought to be imposed on and to replace the Hindu Society and against which the entire Hindu soul rose in deep lamentation and rebellion.

Instead of giving a dry abstract description let us narrate a true story. This is the story of an educated, cultured young Hindu whose name has reached us through the contemporary Muslim chronicles, as Navahoon. This is a compound of two Sanskrit words, *nav* and *ahun* meaning, New-Now. So, this educated young man was named, Mr. Ever Young by his parents. The period is the 14th century of the Christian Era, when the bells were ringing out for the exit of Medieval Age from India as well as from our entire planet. Before this century is out, Columbus would 'sail over waters blue, Vasco de Gama would lay anchor at Calicut after sailing round South Africa and the Pathan Sultanate of Delhi would be simmering with discontent leading to invitation to Babur, the Tiger, to India. Bahmani Sultanate and Vijyanagar Empire would be about to crumble. By this time Islam had firmly established itself as the political sovereign power in India. With the advent of the soldier, had come the religious preacher and the craftsman and the adventurer, and they all had settled here with no idea of

returning back to their countries of origin. The Muslim religious preachers had established themselves in India in the form of Sufis, of whom two famous Orders were, the Chishtis and the Suhравardis. The latter Order of the *Sufis* flourished more vigorously in Sind and Punjab, and could not secure any permanent footing in the Gigantic Doab. The basic difference between the Chishtis and Suhравardis was that the latter emphasised that outward conformity to Islamic Shariat was the first necessary step towards gnosis, while the former stressed the primacy of self-purification, after which the Islamic social way of life, called *shariat*, inevitably follows. The Suhравardis Order sufis had their strong-holds in Multan and Uch. As the keen students of Indian history would know, it was ultimately the Suhравardi view of polity which prevailed with the Mughal emperors, and Aurangzeb spent this entire life, energy and resources in an attempt to establish the monolithic Islamic pattern of Society in the sub-continent of India.

Reverting to the story of our young Hindu friend, Mr. Young, We find that, on account of sheer merit and qualifications, he was appointed a Superintendent of Police, a *darogha* in the township to Uch in the year 1384, when the Suhравardi pontiff Syed Jelal-ud-Din Bukhari, Makhdum-I - Jhehanian, was lying on his death-bed, Mr. Ever Young, out of politeness and official good form made a call on the dying pontiff and greeted him with these well-chosen words: "May God restore your health. Your Holiness is the last of the saints as the Prophet Mohammed was the last of prophets."

Now, it is quite clear to a clear thinking, impartial mind that Mr. Ever Young was just being polite to His Holiness in the context of the official post which Mr. Ever Young held, and the political status which His Holiness enjoyed in the theocratic city-state of Uch. He merely wished, to say that His Holiness was as exalted a saint as Mohammad has claimed himself to be prophet. As students of Islamic theology know, the *hadith* asserts that Mohammad claimed that he was "the last of prophets" (*anna a khirul ambia*)

Syed Jelal-ud-Din, while on the threshold of his death considered it as his holy duty to place a proper construction on the customary greeting with which Mr. Ever Young had addressed him. The Chief of the Uch, then, was the brother of His Holiness, Sadr-ad-Din and the Chief of the police was a new Hindu convert, Raju Quattal. This theocratic trinity construed the polite greeting of Mr. Ever Young to mean that, as tantamount to an expression of faith in Islam, that is, a solemn proclamation by Nav Ahoon that he believed Prophet Mohammad of Arabia to be the last and final Prophet in the matter of religion for all mankind. Upon this, the holy trinity demanded of Nav Ahoon that he should make a formal declaration of conversion from Hinduism to Islam. This, the Hindu young man firmly declined to make, in the full knowledge that it will lead to most serious consequences. His refusal to make a formal declaration of conversion to Islam which he had never accepted as his faith, was authoritatively adjudged by the theological court of Uch as an act of apostasy, for which the punishment is death according to the law of the Shariat. Thereupon, this Hindu youngman fled for his life to the court of Firozeshah Tughlak at Delhi in search of asylum and protection against this Muslim theocratic tyranny. In the meantime, His Holiness, Syed Jelal-ud-Din Bukhari, expired and his younger brother occupied the office of the Muslim pontiff at Uch. This younger brother, pursued the matter of the alleged apostasy of Nav Ahoon and personally travelled to Delhi to urge upon the Defender of the Faith, to execute Nav-Ahoon for the grave sin and crime of apostasy. Firoze Tughlak placed this matter before his Council of Muslim Jurists and they were, by no means, unanimous with the verdict of apostasy passed against Nav Ahoon by the theocratic authorities of Uch. Since there was divergence of opinion, the matter went up to Sultan Firoze Tughlak for final verdict in his capacity as the Defender of the Faith, and the Sultan decided against Nav Ahoon. Nav Ahoon was taken in chains back to Uch and was duly executed as a renegade from

the society of Islam, spurning to the last the alternative of life and worldly honours in exchange for his Hindu faith.

The story is given in detail in the Persian book, *Siyyar-al-Arfeen*, written by Mevlana Fadal-Allah, at pages 159-60, as printed at the Rizvi Press, Delhi in 1311 A.H.

Here it is pertinent to say that the martyrdom of Nav Ahoon is a pure example of a Punjabi Hindu religious martyr, unlike the martyrdom of Haqeeqat, and the exploits and martyrdom of Banda Singh Bahadur, in both of which latter cases the Arya-Samajists of Punjab love to alienate them from their Sikh context to create a Hindu martyrology.

It was against this monolithic political Society that the Hindu soul rebelled to which the Sikh Gurus gave a concrete and dynamic expression in the form of a polity which concedes the right of minority cultures and communities to exist as equal citizens in a single national state.

In such a polity and such a State, which is the true expression of Hindu political genius, and which has been approved and promulgated by the Sikh Gurus, there will be no ruling community or imperial race, such as in all periods of History have emerged, arrogating to themselves, the right of being the chosen people, and who then not only constitute a terrible tyranny over the human soul, such as has been referred to in the story of our Mr. Ever Young, but they also set themselves as the absolute standard for imitation by others. In ancient societies, where an imperial pattern of social form was not forcibly imposed, as in the case of Islamic society, the second danger to human values has always been there. The early Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians and Persians may be mentioned, whose way of life came to be tacitly imitated gravely impeding free development of human personalities. The Greeks in this matter, still seem to live in our thought today. In the contemporary scene, when the Arab speaking people fell behind, they had already passed on the sceptre of cultural authority to western Europe, and, thus in our own life time, we are witnessing this leadership tacitly

move on to the United States and Russia. Although U.S.A. has not imposed military occupation on other nations, yet American idiom and accent, American sartorial fashions. American music and American architecture, tend to assume the form of absolute standards for rest of the world. It can, by no means be seriously argued that they are intrinsically better than anything which can be produced anywhere else.

There is obviously something in human nature which causes it to imitate the thought and mannerism of those who are physically strong. This always has been the case and shall always remain so. The sloppy idealism in which Indian leadership prides today of disapproval of physical strength and military conquest is a temporary phenomenon and the Indians can accept such political shibboleths only at their own peril.

To conclude, the principle of Secularism and Plural Society are the true expressions of the Hindu political genius and tradition, and the Sikh polity which the Gurus developed is the only reliable anchor to which the ship of the State of a free India can be tied for safety and endurance. But, these principles must never be permitted to slide back into the smug belief that the political freedom and political might are of secondary importance for mankind. Guru Gobind Singh gives a timely warning to those, into whose custody the Union of the Republic of India now happens to be. Guru Gobind Singh says: "In this world of phenomena, the measure of all things is eventually determined by the sword and the strength of the muscles of arms."

Everything may not come out of the barrel of the gun, as Mao Tse Tung crudely puts it, but everything worth while must eventually be defended by the gun, so that it may not go under a monolithic totalitarian tyranny which is another name for death long night, *Maharatri* of barbarism and colourless uniformity.

THE MASSACRE SIKHS*

On the 13th of April, 1978, the sacred day of Baisakhi for Hindus and Sikhs both, the day on which the Tenth Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh finally shaped and completed the way of life for the Sikhs in 1699, by ordaining a political nation, the apotheosis of Sikhism, the Khalsa assigning to the Sikh people the task of inserting themselves into history to bring about social changes and cultural trends for the good and benefit of mankind, a dozen and a half men, the cream of the Sikh society were massacred by an organised band before the eyes of the police, when these peaceful Sikhs were on their way to a pre-arranged concourse and gathering of, new permissive sect where, admittedly, grave and malicious insults were being audaciously hurled against the Sikh religion and Sikh beliefs and sentiments to dissuade them from it. Earlier, one million Sikh pilgrims gathered at Amritsar on this sacred day, a day on which Jallianwala Bagh massacre had taken place in 1919 had pleaded in vain to State Ministers present and the local Government authorities to stop this reckless and calculated outrage to Sikh sentiments. Now, a selected batch of a few dozen prominent Sikhs marched bare-footed and unarmed to the gathering of these traducers of Sikhism, but they were stopped at a distance of over a hundred yards away from their venue for a period that proved sufficient for a para-military platoon, armed with lethal weapons, guns, revolvers, acid-filled bottles and mechanical propellants for shooting poison tipped arrows, to emerge from the Sikh-baiters' gathering and

* A white paper issued after massacre of Sikhs in Amritsar on 13th April, 78.

take up positions behind a row of motor trucks already lined on one side. The Sikh protesters had, in the meantime been persuaded by police officers on duty into believing that steps were being taken to stop further provocations to Sikh religious sentiments. Then the voice of the Chief of these Sikh-baiters was heard outside through the elaborate sound-system set up within their enclosure, saying: "These Sikhs think they can stop us from freely carrying out our programme. Let them know today how mistaken they are. Time has come to be active for those come here for this job." At this stage a paramilitary platoon briskly advanced towards the Sikh protesters who, in the meantime, had been joined by many more men, to make a concerted attack on the Sikhs, with bullets, acid-bottles and poisoned arrows. The police on duty hurled tear-gas bombs against the unarmed Sikhs, ostensibly to disperse them, but converting them into sitting ducks for their hunters and *shikaris*. One of these hapless Sikhs, a highly devout, well known and well educated person was wounded grievously, though not fatally, with multiple bullet wound when an attacker shot at him at close range to finish the job. Before this *coup-de-grace*, however, the Sikh was informed by his killer that, "You are a really troublesome person." Thus died Fauja Singh.

AFTERMATH

It did not take long for this drama to reach its denouement. A dozen and a half Sikhs lay dead on the spot, riddled with bullets. Over forty Sikhs received serious injuries with bullets, sharp-edged weapons and *lathis*, and another one hundred Sikhs received grievous injuries requiring medical attention. Some passers-by, including a Muslim labourer, was amongst the dead and two or three of the persons were claimed by the Sikh-baiters as *belonging* to their own "religious" sect though the Sikh-baiters failed to come *forward* to support it by having a formal case registered with the police for proper investigation. It was widely rumoured that many dead bodies of the Sikhs

were taken into possession by their killers and dragged into their enclosure and no trace was available of them. The huge gathering of the Sikh-baiters that was scheduled to be formally addressed by a Punjab State non-Sikh Minister and an influential non-Sikh, Jullundur newspaper owner, continued undisturbed for about three hours even after this massacre of the Sikhs a hundred yards away, and the instigator and organiser of this holocaust, the presiding deity of this Sikh-baiters' organisation, was leisurely and safely escorted out of Punjab with high Government officers respectfully acting as his escort. Two carloads of lethal weapons, earlier brought in, were also thus taken away. On reaching Delhi he was promptly granted an interview with the Prime Minister of India from whom he demanded full, adequate arrangements guaranteeing his personal and his followers' protection. A case for conspiracy to commit murder of Sikhs on the 13th of April, 1978, at Amritsar was registered by the police authorities and caches of lethal weapons and other arms were recovered from the Amritsar meeting place and other organisational centres of these Sikh-baiters. A number of suspects were arrested and detained in judicial lock-up for further action.

ITS TRUE SHAPE

A Government hand-out describes this preplanned massacre of the Sikhs, as a "clash" and the media refer to the killed and injured Sikhs as "Nihangs" and their killers as "Nirankaris". This is in keeping with the age-old practices to place the truth on the scaffold and falsehood on the throne, to safeguard vested interests and to crucify the innocent. But the good people every where, and men of good will of the international community would want to know the truth, and un-masked truth.

THE KILLER AND THE KILLED

A "clash " is where two objects or factions strike noisily

against each other. Where the striking and the sound is wholly one-sided, there is no "clash", and yet the Government handout and almost the entire non-Sikh Press, refer to this massacre of Sikhs as a "clash". As the facts are, almost all the dead persons of this "clash" are the Sikh protesters, each one of them an educated, well-employed citizen and a disciplined, dedicated devout Sikh, barring a stray Muslim labourer, and two or three other passers-by, whom now the killers claim as their own but decline to have their claim properly investigated. All the killed Sikh protesters have been found as unarmed, wearing sheathed short-sized religious symbols, kirpan, unsuitable for chopping even vegetables. It was, thus, a "clash" such as occurred in 1919 A.D. at the Jallianwala Bagh at Amritsar on the Baisakhi day, between the peaceful Indian citizens assembled to protest against the outrageous Rowalt Act and the fully armed Gurkha soldiers of General Dyer.

BAD NAME

The killed Sikh protesters are almost invariably referred to, in the non-Sikh Press and the other national media, as *Nihangs*, "armed with traditional weapons", and the killers are, with tender solicitude, described as *Nirankaris*, "the worshippers of the formless God". Weapons can kill the innocent and the unmanned but words are even deadlier, for, the Word was in the Beginning and the words can not only conceal the murder but make the murderer look like injured innocence itself.

THE NIHANGS

What is a *nihang*? Nihangs are the traditional remnants of the holy militia of Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1707) who dress in their ancient dark-blue uniform and carry their traditional arms, mainly a spear, a sword and a quoitus as emblems of their inner dedication to the Sikh religion. For the last three centuries, they have lived a semi-monastic dedicated life, in this style, even under the British rule and they lead

peaceful and disciplined lives. Even during the Sikh hegemony and sovereignty in the north of India, they were never known to have committed an act of unprovoked violence or wanton killing. Their spirit of public-service, their deathless daring and matchless bravery in battle, has invariably won unqualified praise and approbation from friends and foes in the past. Nihangs are not outlandish outlaws and anti-social desperados, as Jullundhur Press paints them. Amongst those killed on the 13th April, 1978 at Amritsar, there was found not a single *nihang*, unless every citizen who does not keep a shingled and bared head, wears dark coloured dust-concealing Indian garb, does not wear a loose dhoti and does not shave his beard, is to be castigated as a *nihang* and condemned as a potential criminal in our free India. Who are these killers of the Sikhs, almost reverently referred to as, *nirankari*, the worshippers of the formless God, is, however, another story.

TRUE NIRANKARIS

In the late twenties and the early thirties of the nineteenth century there arose and flourished a Sikh puritanical movement in the north western provinces of the Sikh common-wealth, the *Sarkar-i-Khalsa* – the adherents of which movement called themselves *nirankaris*, following the first description that Guru Nanak gave of himself, "Nanak, the Nirankari". "I am Nanak the worshipper of the formless God," This movement is not a separate sect of Sikhism; they practise the principles of Sikhism with unwavering devotion and without laxity. After the expulsion of the Sikhs from what is now Pakistan, the headquarters of these true *nirankari* Sikhs shifted from Rawalpindi to Chandigarh, and they now live in the Indian Punjab and the rest of India, hardworking and prosperous, indistinguishable from the general mass of the Sikh community, except by their marked piety and devotion to religion. Their basic slogan is: *dhan nirankar; dehadhari sabhi khwar*, "ਧਨ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ, ਦੇਹਾ ਧਾਰੀ ਸਭਿ ਖਵਾਰ" that is, "All praise to the Formless God; all

forms are perishable", In the second part of this slogan, the students of comparative religions will detect the echo of the basic Buddhist 'noble truth' *sab anitta*, or an affirmation of the last words on earth of Gautam, the Buddha, *vyadhammā sankhara*: "all aggregates must disintegrate" which is also the true Sikh doctrine. The first part of this slogan is the common ground between all higher religions, the Vedic religion, Brahmanism, Islam, and Judaism including Sikhism. The first part of this slogan, *dhan nirankar*, however, has also been adopted by the Sikh-baiters and pseudo-nirankaris, with the tongue in cheek, for they supplement this slogan by adding *aiya guru bachan avtar, sare jag da palan har*: 'God has descended in human form as Gurbachan Singh, the Light and Guide of mankind and verily, he is the Sustainer of the entire Universe'. A few words are necessary about the genesis, the doctrine and practices of this 'Sustainer of the entire Universe' Gurbachan Singh, the Chief of the Sikh killers at Amritsar, and his followers.

PSEUDO-NIRANKARIS

One Buta Singh (1883-1944) was a paid hymn-singer at the Rawalpindi headquarters of the true Nirankaris, but was dismissed and expelled from their congregation on account of his excessive addiction to alcohol and lax morals. He tried to set up rival or separate *nirankari* congregation at Peshawar to eke out a living but met with no success and died in penury with a revolting disease. He gathered another unemployed companion, Avtar Singh by name, who was making a precarious living by baking bread and selling his own products as a pedlar in the streets of Peshawar till 1947, when he migrated to Delhi as a refugee. The common bond between Buta Singh and this Avtar Singh was their partiality for alcohol and sex and their firm conviction that men are easily to dupe in the name of religion leading to easy money and sumptuous living. The 'success' that had evaded Avtar Singh in the pre-partition Punjab smiled on him in Delhi where

rented a small tenement in the Paharganj area and publicised through agents employed on commission basis that he, Avtar Singh, could reveal the; 'Face of God' to anybody at a short notice and for a moderate fee. Miserable refugees from western Pakistan, hapless and haggard, fell an easy prey to one who promised instant peace of mind, for a small fee, but, without demanding any curbs of self-discipline or self-denial. A new 'religion' was born. the cardinal doctrines of which were as simple as simplicity and acceptable as sin. This Avtar Singh died in 1969 at Delhi affected with cancer and other revolting diseases after proclaiming that his son Gurbachan Singh, aged 17 then, was the God Almighty.

This new religion of liberatinism and permissiveness has three basic tenets, proclaimed openly, solemnly and authoritatively through the written and the spoken word: (1) Believe that Avtar Singh and subsequently, his son, Gurbachan, is God Almighty in human form, having the authority and chairman of all the past prophets of mankind, out of whom, Moses, Mohammad, Chirst, Krishna, Rama, and Guru Nanak are specifically mentioned by name. In the, *Illustrated Weekly*, Bombay, 24th October, 1971, this claim is unequivocally made. (2) No sin can touch or tarnish those who cherish full faith in the cent percent Divinity of Avtar Singh and his progeny. In the officially sponsored write-up about this Gurbachan Singh published in the *Illustrated Weekly*, a prominent follower of this modern religion tells us:

'Before I was converted to this new faith, I was an agnostic (i.e. a misguided Sikh). Gurbachan Singh has completely changed my pysche. I now freely consume beef and pork. I also freely indulge in alcoholic drinks. This makes no deleterious effect on my inner purity and spiritual progress. (as reproduced in the *Nakli Nirankari*, *infra*, p. 126)

Likewise, in the divinely inspired *anubhavi gyan*, of the Sant Nirankari issue of June, 1964 (p. 16) we are informed that the followers of Gurbachan Singh are beyond good and evil,

freed from all moral controls, ethical shackles and social censure:

"My blessed followers are free to indulge in whatever they desire. Nothing is pure; nothing is impure. All fellow-believers merrily tread this straight path."¹

The third tenet of this modern religion is a logical corollary. (3) The only thing, forbidden to the followers of this new 'religion' is, social censure of any fellow-believer for whatever he may or may not do in his personal life.

All these three doctrines are unambiguously and repeatedly proclaimed and re-iterated in the authoritative and official corpus of writings of these pseudo-nirankaris, their ghost-written scripture, *Avtar bani* a book, with cheap contents in crude Punjabi diction, proclaims this divine revelation for the enlightenment of the modern man: "In the Beginning in the Middle and at the End of all things, Formless God is ever and for ever more... He is the Creator-omni-competent under the name and style of Avtar Singh. The Mother of the Universe (Mrs. Avtar Singh), therefore, would have everyone now that Gurbachan Singh is the only true guide and Light for mankind for he is, verily, the God Almighty incarnate."² May, 1964 issue (P9) of the official publication of this 20th century 'world-religion' informs all and sundry that, "Avtar Singh is Allah returned to Earth and God also has been brought along. Rama frolicks in his lap, for, he Avtar Singh, is the one and only God, the Lord comedown to Earth."³ Again, February, 1966 issue of this periodical

1. Jo ji chahe so khande ne, jo ji kahe so pinde ne,
Koi juttha nahi kuch sucha nahi, ih ikko piala pinde ne.
ਜੋ ਜੀਅ ਚਾਹੇ ਸੋ ਖਾਂਦੇ ਨੇ, ਜੋ ਜੀਅ ਕਹੇ ਸੋ ਪੀਂਦੇ ਨੇ।
ਕੋਈ ਜੁਠਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕੁਛ ਸੁੱਚਾ ਨਹੀਂ, ਇਹ ਇਕੋ ਪਿਆਲਾ ਪੀਂਦੇ ਨੇ।
2. Ad madh te ant tak kaim hai nirankar, ape sabh(u) kucch kar.
Riai na rakh ke Avtar. Jagat mata ne jagat nu kiha ant pukar.
Gurbachan guru hai jagat da ape hai avtar.
ਆਦ ਮਧ ਤੋਂ ਅੰਤ ਤਕ ਕਾਇਮ ਹੈ ਨਿਰੰਕਾਰ, ਆਪੇ ਸਭ ਕੁਛ ਕਾਰ।
ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਨਾ ਰਖ ਕੇ ਅਵਤਾਰ, ਜਗਤ ਮਾਤਾ ਨੇ ਜਗਤ ਨੂੰ ਕਿਹਾ ਅੰਤ ਪੁਕਾਰ।
ਗੁਰਬਚਨ ਗੁਰੂ ਹੈ ਜਗਤ ਦਾ ਆਪੇ ਹੈ ਅਵਤਾਰ।

reveals the 'fundamental truth to the whole world' thus. "The whole world must know this fundamental truth, Here he is (as Avtar Singh), the creator of the world. He is the only everlasting and undying one, all else is perishable."⁴ Lest doubts should disturb sceptical temperaments as to the authority of "the Mother of the Universe" to invest her son Gurbachan Singh, as 'the Creator-omnicompetent God.' here is the logical argument to dispel all doubts, given in the modern scripture, *Avtar-bani* itself.

"She, who marries a medico is automatically called a 'lady-medico'. She who weds a school teacher is known as a 'female teacher'. I, by becoming the spouse of Avtar Singh, have been exalted as "the Queen of the Universe"⁵

But off and on, the current 'Sustainer of the entire Universe', Gurbachan Singh makes such statements in Press and on platform as he finds necessary to tide over a particular situation which statement is supposed to have no binding force on him or his followers, since he is, *ex hypothesis*, immaculate and utterly pure and no sin can touch or tarnish his followers. The late Avtar Singh was wholly illiterate and ignorant person but he was amply endowed with the shrewdness of a pedlar. His "scripture" was ghosted by a cheap pen-pusher whose identity is known. The current "Sustainer of the entire Universe", Gurbachan Singh, is a scooter-repairer by training and his educational progress did not proceed beyond upper primary standards, an admission

3. Allah ape mud aiya je, God bhi nal liaiya je.
Ram bhi is di bukkal khehle ih rabb ape aiya.
ਅਲਾਹ ਆਪੇ ਮੁੜ ਆਇਆ ਜੇ, ਗੋਡ ਭੀ ਨਾਲ ਲਿਆਇਆ ਜੇ।
ਰਾਮ ਭੀ ਇਸ ਦੀ ਬੁੱਕਲ ਖੋਲੇ ਇਹ ਰੱਬ ਆਪੇ ਆਇਆ।
4. Dunia walio dassan main gall ikko ih baittha je dunia banaun wala.
sada es ne kaim te daim rahina baki sabeh log ae aun te jan wala.
ਦੁਨੀਆ ਵਾਲਿਓ ਦਸਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਗੱਲ ਇਕੋ ਇਹ ਬੈਠਾ ਜੇ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਬਨਾਉਣ ਵਾਲਾ।
ਸਦਾ ਇਸ ਨੇ ਕਾਇਮ ਤੇ ਦਾਇਮ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਬਾਕੀ ਸਭੇ ਲੋਗ ਏ ਆਉਣ ਤੇ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲਾ।
5. Doktor de lad laggi koi akhe daktarni; master de nal laian lavan sabh jag
akhe mastarni, Avtar Singh de lad main laggi ban gai is jag di rani main.
ਡਾਕਟਰ ਦੇ ਲੜ ਲੱਗੀ ਕੋਈ ਆਖੇ ਡਾਕਟਰਨੀ; ਮਾਸਟਰ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਲਈਆਂ ਲਾਵਾਂ ਸਭ ਜਗ ਆਖੇ ਮਾਸਟਰਨੀ।
ਅਵਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਲੜ ਮੈਂ ਲੱਗੀ ਬਣ ਗਈ ਇਸ ਜਗ ਦੀ ਰਾਣੀ ਮੈਂ।

he has repeatedly made in public statements and through issues of his official periodical.⁶ The followers that he gathered around himself remained limited in number till about ten years ago, when he was catapulted into a world-figure, overnight, with branches of his 'Mission' in over a hundred countries and with huge activity-centres and properties through out India. His private and family assets are now believed to be computable in million of rupees. High politics, secret and practically unlimited patronage and resources, have endowed Gurbachan Singh with vast affluence and power.

MORAL DECAY

This, however, Gurbachan Singh's phenomenal access to affluence and power, popularity and prestige, is not a point of contention between Gurbachan Singh, his followers and the Sikhs. Nor is the moral laxity, unbridled permissiveness and disintegrative malaise which he and his movement foster in society a direct issue between the Sikhs and these pseudonirankaris. Retreat from religious and absolute moral values is a world-wide phenomenon and permissiveness, sex promiscuity, moral laxity and social disintegration is, by no means, peculiar to India today; the phenomenon is world-wide and oecumenical, the reasons for which are deep seated and historical. Nor is this phenomenon exceptional to modern times. It erupts, it seems, whenever there is an onset of decay and deterioration in social cohesiveness and moral vitality of a culture or civilisation. Gibbon has noted emergence of all sorts of sects and societies, "Oriental religions", as he called them, when the Roman Empire weakened and disintegrated. In *Bhagvadgita*, we are told that, "as moral decay sets in, men take to adulation of and subservience to mortal humans and abandon worship of the unseen God": *sivanam puja paritya ja manussanam upasanam*. The Sikh pious texts of Bhai Gurd

6. Sant Nirankari, *Ibid.*, April, Oct., Nov. 1964.

(d.1637) tell us that a symptom of moral decay is that, "social censure and absolute moral judgement disappear and men become planning of their own passing fancies and corruptive passion", *koi kisai na varjiai soi karai joe man bhavai*. "ਕੋਈ ਕਿਸੈ ਨਾ ਵਰਜੀਐ ਸੋਈ ਕਰਾਏ ਜੋ ਮਨ ਭਾਵੈ". Guru Gobind Singh provides us with a key to an understanding of this phenomenon by revealing that, "there shall arise an Absolute God in every house, altogether contemptible and degraded men these.": *ghar ghar hoe bahenge rama. tinu te sahe na kou kama*. "ਘਰ ਘਰ ਹੋਇ ਬਹੈਗੇ ਰਾਮਾ। ਤਿਨੁ ਤੇ ਸਹੇ ਨਾ ਕੋਊ ਕਾਮਾ॥" Have Our pseudo-narankaris taken their cues from *Bhagvadgita*, Bhai Gurdas and Guru Gobind Singh, in founding their new religion for the modern miserable man, in utter defiance and contempt of the Voice behind the *Bhagvadgita*, the Inspiration behind Bhai Gurdas and the Light in Guru Gobind Singh? Sri Dina Nath, Sidhant Alankar, an eminent writer, in the April, 1973 issue of the Hindi Monthly, *Jana Gyan* (p.30) tells us that:

"There is a deluge of bogus gods-incarnate and hypocritical gurus in India, these days. Currently, there are over two hundred and fifty persons thriving in India who claim to be gurus or gods-incarnate. Some of them stake the claim that they are the supreme god, Vishnu; others proclaim that they are the god of gods, Siva, and still others assert that they are incarnations of Sri Rama Chandra, Lord Krishna, or the Final Incarnation heralding the End of the World, Immaculate Kalki."

THE ISSUE

The issue between the Sikhs and Gurbachan Singh and his caucus is three-fold. (1) The main thrust and the real salience of this movement is anti-Sikhism, and its permissiveness and promiscuity is secondary. (2) Its methodology is denigration and coarse ridicule of Sikh doctrines and practices and malicious outraging of Sikh religious sentiments, and insulting Sikh religious beliefs.

(3) Its dynamism is politics promoted and prompted by political powers that aim at degrading and demoralising the Sikh people, permanently to deprive them of the control of their own history and their spiritual potential, and thus reducing them into secondary citizens and camp-followers so as eventually to divest them of their living separateness, shrinking them into a footnote in History. Let this be explained briefly.

SIKH BAITING

The Chief of these pseudo-nirankaris strictly observes the outward garb and forms of a saintly Sikh and so do his aides and lieutenants. And not without malice aforethought. Till only recently, their public gatherings were invariably centred around the ceremonious installation of the Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, that the Sikhs revere as the visible symbol and form of the Light and the Vehicle of the Grace of God, accessible to man in the form of the Guru's Word and Testament. This Sikh doctrine and faith foretaught by five centuries is the latest modern development in European religious thought and theological dogmatic (Karl Barth, 1886-1968) that recognises distinction between the Word and a religion, by accepting that while the former is God's self-revelation to man, the latter is the product of human culture and aspirations and is not to be identified with saving revelation, for, salvation can come only from God and not from man. Almost all these pseudo-nirankaris are ignorant, unlettered commonality familiar with nothing about religion and sophisticated thought except the portmanteau jargon of Sikhism, in Lewis Carroll's sense of a word packed with sense and sound of many words, capable of being employed successfully for ridiculing and creating confusion about Sikhism. (1) In their writings and preachings, their main and primary concern and pre-occupation is to misinterpret and to corrupt Sikh doctrines and Sikh beliefs and thus to confound

and insult the Sikh Scripture publicly. The nefarious and criminal game has been going on, unchecked, for the last twenty or so years and has given rise to many near-riot scenes between the Sikhs and these Sikh-baiters. In their gatherings, they display the Sikh scripture in traditional ceremonial robes as Sikhs do, but degrade it by placing it on a lower level platform than the one on which their Chief or main preacher seats himself. No graver provocation can be offered to Sikh religious sentiments than when these antics are publicly and maliciously indulged in. A parallel would be if a non-Hindu placed a Hindu ikon or sacred idol under his feet in public and then unfavourably commented upon the religious concept implicit in this ikon or idol. The grave provocation involved is comparable in magnitude to the insult to Hindus and Hinduism that Mahmud of Ghaznavi offered, by carrying the sacred *lingam* of Somanath to the Jami Mosque of his capital to place it on its footsteps for being treaded over by Muslim worshippers, in the 12th century. The point is not that the Sikhs demand or expect everybody to accept the Sikh scripture the way the Sikhs regard it; the point is that they resent and rightly so, its profanation and calculated insult to it by others. (2) In their writings and in their preaching they pretend to pick up a sacred text out of the Sikh scripture to explain and comment upon it as Sikhs do in their congregations and then ridicule, twist and misinterpret by design. The exegesis of the sacred text is "invariably prefaced by the remarks:" This fellow here says "*kahinda hai*, a gross form of disrespect and insult to the Sikh Prophets and sages through whom the Sikh revelations in their scripture as having been manifested. This gross insult is repeated publicly, on every occasion, in word and in writing issue of their official publication the Sant Nirankari, this *kahinda hai* insult is reproduced as having come out of the mouth of "God Almighty", Avtar Singh, himself (3) Such commentaries, when reproduced in the Sant Nirankari and their other publications always bear the caption : "Testament by the True King" *vichar sri sache patshah*. The Sikhs have

traditionally referred to their Gurus and Prophets, as *sacha patshah*, the Spiritual Master, and these pseudo-nirankaris have appropriated this title for their Chief, deliberately to substitute him for the Sikh Gurus and to outrage maliciously the Sikh religious beliefs (4) In their gatherings and concourses they frequently refer to the Sikh scripture as, "a big bulky, useless volume of miscellaneous writing", *potha*.⁷ A didactic miscellany⁸ in contradistinction to a compendium of sacred texts, just to outrage the religious beliefs and feelings of the Sikhs. In June, 1973 at Nagpur, the wife of Gurbachan Singh, who is pompously styled as Raj-Mata, "the Queen Mother", made a public speech in which she said that, "My husband alone is the Deliverer of mankind in this Age; he *alone* can emancipate you. No useless and pointless big bulky volume of so called Divine Testaments (here, she pointed towards the Sikh scripture) can do you any good?"⁹ In the August 1964 issue of then Sant Nirankari, the Sikh scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, is described as a "book containing writings of 70-72 (*sic*, actually, 35) educated persons who believed in no religion or dharma". In this issue, the President of the Nirankari Mission, the Delhi-based Supreme Organisation of these pseudo-nirankaris, further asserts that all writings in the Sant Nirankari are "divinely revealed", *anubhavi gyan*, of the identical order as is claimed for the Sikh sacred texts of the Guru Granth Sahib. (5) In the June, 1964 issue of the Sant Nirankari in an essay, "What is true Revelation", *gurbani ki hai*? It is said about Guru Granth Sahib as follows:

"How can any sensible person call the writings in this big bulky book, a Revelation? True, it contains didactic material but nothing more."¹⁰

In the April, 1964 issue of this Journal (p. 31) a follower

7. Pratap Singh, Giani, *Nakli Nirankari*, IV, ed., 1975. Amritsar, p. 95.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 90.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

10. Kanuni dharavan de ede vadde granth nun gurbani kis taran kaih sakde han, han likhtan te nasihtan jarur han. (p. 28)

of the "Sustainer of the entire Universe", Gurbachan Singh, records his confession of conversion to this new religion thus :

"I, the lowliest of the lowlies, was much devoted to diligent study of the Sikh scripture. This craze is now all over. It will surprise all except my fellow nirankaris, for, they might wonder, how such a change is possible."¹¹

These instances' of anti-Sikh dynamism and stances of this new religion are just illustrative and by no means exhaustive.

PROVOCATION

The methodology evolved and constantly practised to insult Sikh beliefs and institutions and to provoke publicly Sikh religious susceptibilities is no less crude and objectionable, (1) The congregations of these pseudo-nirankaris, whether in the presence of Gurbachan Singh, the "Sustainer of the entire Universe" or otherwise, invariably begin and end with hymn singing the *sabad-kirtan*, mode of Sikh worship and in these hymn-singing sessions the sacred and pious Sikh, poems are intermixed and entwined with anti-Sikh apocrypha and self-made verses calculated to profane Sikhism and to insult its sacrosanct dignity. This mock *kirtan* thus becomes the genre of the anti-Christ Black Mass of Medieval Christian history, not enacted in secret privacy like the Black Mass, but publicly, in centres of dense Sikh populations and on occasions of traditional Sikh religious gatherings, to insult Sikh religion, to mock at Sikh practices and to provoke Sikhs into violent protest or dishonourable submission. These hymn-session end, invariably, with their litany;

"Gurbachan Singh is the Descent of Divinity on Earth.
He is the Sustainer of the entire Universe

11. daas nun gurbani parhan da shaunk si, oh sabh khatam ho cukka hai.
Nirankari pathkan ton ilava baki parhan wale hairan honge ki sachmuch hi khatam ho chukkia hai?

(O, Gurbachan) your will is the sole measure of Goodness. For, you are the eternal living God."¹²

The last couplet of this litany is from the Sikh Scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, which enunciates that, God's will is the Matrix and final Test of human ethical judgement and He is the eternal Living God. The first two lines are a piece of crude versification in the *Avtar bani* of these *pseudo-nirankaris* and by joining these two couplets the Sikh sacred text had been grossly profaned and put into service of deification of Gurbachan Singh. Nothing could be conceived as more provoking to the Sikh religious sentiments. As the April, 1972 issue (p. 26) of the *Sant Nirankari* shows, the pious text of Bhai Gurdas, *jahar pir jagat gur baba*, "Guru Nanak is the living Light and Guide of mankind," has been perverted by these pseudo-Nirankaris into *jahar pir Gurbachan Baba*, (Baba) Gurbachan is the Light and Guide of mankind'. (2) Gurbachan Singh has given title-names to certain of his followers in mock imitation of Sikh hierarchy of prophets and saints. His wife is ceremonially addressed as Mata Tripta, the name of the mother of Guru Nanak. His son has been actually named Gobind Singh, not as a mark of reverence for Guru Gobind Singh, as many Sikhs do, but as a mockery of the last Sikh Prophet. On the Baisakhi (13th April) of 1973, at Hoshiarpur in Punjab, this Gurbachan Singh, who has named his son as, Gobind Singh, created a serious riot by stating in a public gathering that, "Guru Gobind Singh, the Sikh Prophet knew nothing about spiritualism or devotion to God; he was just a common hunter, a shikari "of birds and animals." So, he could not have named his son, Gobind Singh, in any spirit of reverence towards the Sikh Prophet. It has been done demonstrably, in mocking contempt of the Sikh Prophet. On the same occasion this Gurbachan Singh gratuitously said that when Sikhs reverently gather to clear the silt out of the holy

12. aiya Bachan guru avtar, sare jag da palanhar.
jo tudhu bhavai sai bhalikar, tun sada salamat nirankar.

lake at Amritsar, *karseva*, in fact, they are engaging in a stupid and futile labour, *bekar-seva*. Like sensible persons, he and his followers, ran away into safety when public feeling violently erupted against his crude profanities of and malicious insults to Sikh religion. He has conferred the ceremonial names and titles of *Baba Budha*, (the Sikh patriarch), *Bebe Nanaki* (the sister of Guru Nanak). Bhagat Kabir (the revered saint of Sikhology), Mira Bai (the peerless God-intoxicated medieval princess), and so on and so forth. On certain of his followers, men and women, to see and know whom is to know what malice and contempt resides in the bosom of this man against Sikhism and the galaxy of Sikh saints. (3) As reported in the April, 1966 issue of the *Sant Nirankari* (p.7), Avtar Singh in a public gathering at Delhi, on the 27th February, 1966, proclaimed that:

"While Guru Gobind Singh had ordained only Five Beloved Ones as the founding members of the Khalsa, the apotheosis of Sikhism, I, Avtar Singh, have now ordained Seven Beloved Ones."

Gurbachan Singh, the son and successor of Avtar Singh, has now re-named these Seven Beloved ones *Satt pyaras*, as, Seven Stars, *satt sitaras*, betraying his deep attachment to the movie-cult and intimate interest in cine-Literature. Incidentally, on the fateful day of the 13th April, 1978, this Gurbachan Singh was taken in a huge procession, under the Government licence and police-protection, through the winding streets of the holy city of Amritsar, and throughout, en route, was being repeatedly proclaimed on the loud-speaker addressing a million strong Sikh pilgrims "Behold, Baba Gurbachan Singh, the real Guru of the Age who is competent to release Sikhs from the bonds of transmigration. While Guru Gobind Singh could ordain only Five Beloved Ones, he, Gurbachan Singh, has ordained Five Stars for elevation of mankind." It was this grave provocation, audaciously offered to the gathered Sikh pilgrims at Amritsar on this fateful day that outraged the Sikh religious feelings, as and on learning that Gurbachan Singh

and his followers were still repeating this and other similar insults to the Sikh religion and sentiments, a batch of respectable and disciplined Sikhs marched in protest to the venue of Gurbachan Singh's gathering and were stopped by the policemen on duty, a hundred yards away, till the private militia of Gurbachan Singh, massacred the un-suspecting Sikhs, the police lending hand by tear-gasing the Sikh protestors. (4) When then Fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan (1563-1606) established Amritsar as the centre of Sikh religion, the first sacred tank he got dug-up, was *Santokhsar*. Avtar Singh has recently dug up a ditch at his headquarters at Delhi and has named it *Santokhsar* with the deliberate and malicious intention of insulting the Sikh religion. (5) *Mahapursha* is a Buddhist appellation for a perfected, fully integrated man as the opposite number of the vedic *Arya*, "the noble man" *Brahmagyani* is the Upanisadic term for the highest, spiritually evolved soul. In Sikhism both these words transvalued and re-interpreted as identical in content, designating a "perfect man," *Insanul-akmal* concept of the eleventh century Muslim philosopher, Abdul Karim Jili, and in the Sikh scripture, *mahapursha* and *brahmagyani* are interchangeably employed to denote a fully evolved and spiritually perfected man. The Vedic concept of *arya* is not inducted into Sikh religious terminology owing to its undertones of caste and distinction by birth. The pseudo-Nirankaris, through their chief, the Father and the son, Avtar Singh and Gurbachan Singh, have entitled a few dozens of their followers as *mahapurshas* or *brahmagyani*, all hawkers, and petty traders, rustics and ignoramuses, decrepit social drop-outs and rejects in their congregations and public gatherings. These persons are ceremoniously presented to the audience, with the object and intention of mocking at Sikhism an insulting Sikh doctrines and beliefs. (6) In 1972 Gurbachan Singh, to outdo the Agha Khan and Asiatic emperors and magnates of the past ages, had himself publicly weighed against bundles of Reserve Bank of India paper-currency. Whether this weighing ceremony was

a proof positive of the divinity of Gurbachan Singh or merely a device to convert smuggled money or secret funds into white, legitimate money, is not a direct issue between the Sikhs and Gurbachan Singh's caucus. Photographs of this royal and spectacular ceremony widely appeared in the Press and these photos carried a caption underneath : *ape kanda tol taraji ape tolan-hara*. This is a text from Guru Granth Sahib (*Suhi-1*) wherein the Sikh Scripture, in reference to the human numenous experience of God, poses the question:

"Who shall measure the Glory of God and weigh His Greatness? Who the supervisor and which the weighing apparatus?"

And the answer is supplied in the text under reference and its concluding lines:

"Who else but God Himself can be the measurer and weigher, the weighing machine and the supervisor, because, as it is, human mind is purblind and feeble, human reason self-limited and capable of moving only on set rails, infected with distracting mercuriality and alienated from its Base."¹³

Gurbachan Singh and his cronies have, in this instance, not only fully equated Gurbachan Singh with God the Almighty and the Transcendent but in the process, have denigrated the Sikh vision of God, the Sikh understanding of the human existential situation, with the evil and malicious intention of confounding the Sikh religion and outraging the religious feelings of the Sikhs. Such instances and antics of these enemies of Sikhism are there in any number but the point has been made out that, the "religion" which Gurbachan Singh and his late father, preach and have preached is no religion at all. A religion deals with "the sacred", the sacred as forbidden, the sacred as mysterious, the sacred as secret and

13. andhula nich jati pardesi khin(u) avai til(u) javai.
ta ki sangati nanak(u) rahinda kion kar muddha pavai.
ਅੰਧੁਲਾ ਨੀਚ ਜਾਤਿ ਪਰਦੇਸੀ ਖਿਨੁ ਆਵੈ ਤਿਲੁ ਜਾਵੈ ॥
ਤਾ ਕੀ ਸੰਗਤਿ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਰਹਦਾ ਕਿਉ ਕਰਿ ਮੁੜਾ ਪਾਵੈ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 731)

the sacred as potent, but the pseudo-nirankari cult deals with no secret, sacred mystery and is exclusively concerned with earthly pleasures and gratification of human passions. Religion is an ensemble of scruples; is plain anti-religion, that is pseudo-nirankaris. This cult, besides, is demonstrably a conspiracy, a ploy and a facade for destroying Sikhism through a crude methodology of corrupting and insulting Sikhism and outraging Sikh beliefs. How can such a sadistic and satanic enterprise be protected by or seek protection under Article 25 of the Constitution of India, as is being demanded? The Article 25 lay down that, "freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practice and propagate religion" is constitutionally guaranteed in India, "subject to decency, law and order and public morality." The 'religion' and activities of Gurbachan Singh cannot attract this provision as applicable to their case.

POLITICAL GAME

The real political dynamism behind this high conspiracy to demoralise and destroy Sikhism as a world-religion and to liquidate Sikhs as a political people, has been known in knowledgeable circles for the last over a dozen years, but there has been a conspiracy of silence, to keep mum over it, by the national media and the political power wielders, for reasons of expediency. In an early last week issue of April, 1978 of the Chandigarh edition, the *Daily Indian Express*, however, a public-spirited leader, Sat Pal Baghi of Ferozepore, has spelt out briefly some of the unvarnished truth, as follows :

"The genesis of the real trouble between the Nirankaris and Akalis goes back to the years when Mrs. Indira Gandhi headed the Union Government. She wanted to weaken the Shiromani Akali Dal but found that Akalis could not be brought to heel. She thought of an elaborate plan to strengthen the Nirankari sect not only in Punjab but throughout the country and abroad also. Official patronage was extended to

the Nirankaris much to the chagrin of Akalis who have always considered the Nirankaris as heretics.

In pursuit of this policy of divide and rule, Mrs. Gandhi personally gave clearance for a diplomatic passport to be issued to the Nirankari Chief and the Indian High Commissioners and Ambassadors abroad were instructed to show him respect and regard. This was meant to help the sect to improve its image and increase its following abroad.

During Mrs. Gandhi's regime, the Nirankaris were known to be receiving financial help from secret Government funds not open to audit or scrutiny by Parliament.

During the Emergency the recalcitrant attitude of the Akalis further annoyed Mrs. Gandhi and Mr. Sanjay Gandhi. Efforts for building a parallel organisation among the Sikhs of Punjab as a counterblast to the Akalis were intensified. At the instance of Mrs. Gandhi, the Congress regime began giving greater official patronage to the Nirankaris' sect. Mr. H.S. Chhina, IAS, a staunch Nirankari was appointed Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government in 1976.

As a result of open official patronage and support, this sect got a considerable boost within the administrative set-up of the Punjab Government. Mr. Chhina appointed Mr. Niranjan Singh, IAS, as Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur. Mr. Niranjan Singh tried his best to enlarge the field of operations of the Nirankaris. It is during this period that the Sant of Bhindranwale took up the challenge posed by this growing sect.

Sat Pal Baghi might have added that the Government of India directives to their ambassadors abroad specifically stated that all necessary steps must be taken to boost Gurbachan Singh amongst the Sikhs settled abroad.

SIKH PREDICAMENT

Apart from this high political hostility, the Sikhs in India face other grave impediments to their viability and honourable existence. Firstly, the die-hard, obscurantist element of Punjab

Hindus have openly viewed the Sikh and Sikhism as their enemy number one, a sentiment which obstreperously erupted, in the seventies of the 19th century, after the loss of the hegemony and political sovereignty of the Sikhs in the north of India, with no foreseeable possibility of its recovery. The impulse and shape of this utter hostility is spelt-out in the 'Secret' document, A Report on Developments in Sikh Politics (1900-1911), by Mr. D. Petrie, Assistant Director, Criminal Intelligence, Government of India, Simla dated, 11th August, 1911, now preserved in the National Archives, New Delhi, which has the following as its paragraph, 6 :

"Hinduism has always been hostile to Sikhism whose Gurus powerfully and successfully attacked the Hindu principle of Caste, which is the foundation on which the whole fabric of Brahmanism has been reared. The activities of Hindus have, therefore, been constantly directed to the undermining of Sikhism both by preventing the children of Sikh fathers from taking the *pahul* and by seducing professed Sikhs from their allegiance to their faith. Hinduism has strangled Buddhism, once a formidable rival to it and it has already made serious inroads into the domains of Sikhism".

This Hindu hostility to Sikhism has become a permanent strain in the sub-conscious psyche of the citified Punjabi Hindu, not urbanised, not mentally cultured or intellectually elevated, but surface-polished and dulled within. The present day noisy disavowal of the principle of Hindu caste on political level and for political reasons in India, has not, in the least, mellowed the rigour of this urban crust of the Punjabi Hindus of their hostility to Sikhism and the Sikhs, and every opportunity is avidly seized upon to down the Sikhs, whether it is the question of Punjabi language, a Punjabi-speaking state or a ready support to any movement or trend aimed at weakening or destroying Sikhs. This mainly explains the

orchestrated anti-Sikh and pro-Gurbachan Singh stances consistently adopted by fascist Hindu leaders and the Urdu and Hindi Press of Jullundur, an exclusive monopoly of this anti-Sikh brigade. Fortunately for the Sikhs, this irrational and primitival hostility towards the Sikh is not shared by the Hindus in the East and South of India, or the trans-Jamuna Gangetic plains generally.

PRE-DISPOSITIONS

The famous Indologist, Al-Beruni. (973-1048) has noted in his *Kitabul-Hind* a peculiar trait in Hindu psyche that puts it apart from the generality of other cultures and societies, that of a complete bifurcation between conceptual thought and spiritual commitment. He points out, with unconcealed amazement, that a Hindu would passionately and with great ability and skill, argue and defend a thesis or concept, but under no circumstances, would involve his entire and total commitment to its practical defence. After a splendid and erudite debate over a proposition, he would retire to the peace of his home and hearth, the mundane concerns and interests of himself and his family, never risking his life or property in its active defence. The truly cultured Hindu regards such totalist commitment as low and vulgar, the mark of a raw, unformed and undisciplined mind. Al-Beruni states that

"On the whole there is very little disputing about theological topics among themselves; at the utmost they fight with words, but they will never stake their soul or their body or their property on religious controversy ."

Sir Syed Ahmad, an eminent Indian patriot of the 19th century, in his famous book, *Asbab-i-Baghavate Hind* (1958) has noted that while the basic grievance of the Muslims against the East India Company's government was that the latter was conspiring to confound and alter their religious faith and beliefs, the Hindus resented interference in their age-old rituals and social customs most, for, while a Muslim regards

question of his faith and belief as a matter of his eternal damnation or ever lasting felicity, a Hindu has no such total commitment or illusion. Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965) in *Indian Thought and its Development* contends that for a Hindu religious faith and belief is just a matter of celebration, unalloyed intellectual comprehension and impersonal verbal statement, and it does not touch the core of his being, the emotive structure of his personality wherein nestles the black featureless waste-land of *advaita*, non-duality — "a position unacceptable of European mind." This unique trait of Hindu perception explains honest and unbiased disapproval of a Sikh regarding his religious faith and belief as a matter of life and death for him and his active need to assert his commitment, as an act of 'fanaticism', illicit encroachment on others' rights and privileges, gross intolerance and uncultured outlook. The basic hostility of the urban crust of the Hindu northern India towards Sikhism and his own fundamental attitude towards religious faith and belief, explain the Orchestrated hostility of the Hindu Press of Jullundur manifested in relation to this recent massacre of Sikhs.

FELLOW-TRAVELLERS

But a similar anti-Sikh posture assumed by the Punjabi language Communist Press and the Communist Party has a different explanation. In his essay, on the Importance of Militant Materialism, Lenin has accorded the destruction of all religion as the first priority in the Communist scheme of things, resolutely condemning "any manifestation of a conciliatory attitude towards religious ideology." Communism thought also rejects any notion of immutable ethical principles. Lenin said: "Our morality is entirely subordinated to the interest of class struggle". Everything that allows and aids the triumph of Communism is moral and everything that stands in its way is immoral. Sikhs are staunch champions of religion and Sikhism as the upholder of absolute moral principles.

the greatest hurdle to the triumph of Communism in this part of the world, Gurbachan Singh and his cult is basically anti-religion, antagonistic to abiding, irksome ethical values, and specifically aims at annihilation of Sikhism. Therefore, communist logic compulsively implicates that this massacre of the Sikhs should be approved and justified. The communist skill in ethical acrobatics is further reinforced by a psychotic sense of guilt which perpetually haunts these Punjab Communists, mostly of Sikh origins, for having turned their backs on the religion of their forefathers and the fundamental insights into Reality of their ancestors, which to less superficial and impulsive minds could have afforded full scope and sanction to their genuine urges for social justice and necessary social transformations. This terrible guilt-complex haunts and distorts the psyche of every sensitive Sikh, turned-a-communist, and fierce hostility towards Sikhism and the Sikhs is their mode of escape from the torture of this guilt-complex. For these reasons these Communists have become bed-fellows of a section of the citified Hindus of the Punjab in opposition and hostility to the Sikhs.

IT HAPPENED BEFORE

This phenomenon, in which Sikh religious sensibility is calculatedly outraged and their human dignity cruelly injured, has its historical antecedents in this part of the world. It was in the late twenties of this century that a cultural ancestor of the present anti-Sikh Hindu urban crust wrote and published a small book, purporting to be a research-paper in history, under the title of Rangila Rasul: 'Mohammad, the pleasure-loving Prophet'. The matrimonial history of this God-intoxicated and world-shaking Prophet was recounted in this booklet in minute details supported by authoritative Muslim writings, and by saints and twists well familiar to history-writers. The conclusion was drawn and spelt-out that Mohammad was a lascivious, lecherous man. The booklet was

concluded with the mocking epilogue: *Bol Rangila Rasul kijai*. Anybody who knows anything about Islam and Muslim sensitiveness and sensibility knows that it is basic to them that while "liberties with God are permissible, not so with Mohammad": *ba khuda diwana bash-o-ba Mohammad hoshiar*. The entire Muslim world of India writhed in anguish at this gross insult to and attack on the Muslim community but they were laughed at and chidden by the citified Hindu Press of Lahore, for being primitive, medieval, religious fanatics, unreformed by sophistication and modern liberal education that teaches objective, critical thinking and dispassionate judgements. To assuage Muslim feelings the British authorities in Punjab, however, prosecuted in a law-court the publisher of the offensive booklet, under Section 295 of the Indian Penal Code, the only statutory provision available in relation to insults to religion. This provision makes it an offence punishable with imprisonment for two years, "to injure or defile a place of worship or any object held sacred by any class of persons, with the intention of insulting the religion" of others. The publisher was convicted in the lower court but the Lahore High Court acquitted him, for good reasons, because in the *Rangila Rasul*, neither a place of worship nor a sacred object had been defiled or injured. The book had maliciously insulted the Muslim religion and outraged the religious feelings of Muslims. It was at this stage that a wailing dirge was often heard in the towns of Punjab during nocturnal stillnesses:

"On my Master, the Messenger of God
My agony is as great as was yours,
When they persecuted you to flee from Mecca to Medina
Give me a place of refuge similar to the one God gave to you.
My cruel neighbours would not let me live in peace in India."¹⁴

14. mere maula bula lo madine mujhe,
yahan Hind mein denge na jine mujhe.

In their utter anguish the book had unredeemed despair. The Indian Muslims felt impotent in their rage and consequently a Muslim, Ilam Din, by name, murdered the publisher of the offensive booklet in broad day-light, for, the real author had remained anonymous. Ilam Din was convicted and hanged to death for wilful murder under Section 302 of the Indian Penal Code. The funeral procession of Ilam Din was a huge event, led by no less a person than Sir Mohammad Iqbal, "the Poet of the East" and Maulana Zafar Ali, 'The Father of Urdu Journalism' to demonstrate the magnitude of injury felt by the entire body of Indian Muslims. This, however, gave rise to a general impression in the minds of those who perversely believe that to insult the religion and to outrage the religious sentiments of a fellow citizen is a fundamental right of 'freedom of expression' and 'liberty of conscience' and that such a fundamental right must be repeatedly asserted. Soon after, somebody in the West Punjab, named a pack-donkey of his, as Mohammad. This was no offence under the law as the High Court judgement in the Rangila Rasul case had shown. An outraged Muslim murdered the owner of this pack-donkey and was hanged to death by the judicial courts. Muslims were in deep desperate despair. Not long after, another protagonist of 'freedom of expression' and 'liberty of conscience' named his dog as, Ahmad, a proper name of the Prophet of Islam. A muslim murdered this owner of the dog also for which he paid with his life on the scaffold. At this stage, the authorities of the British raj took notice of the gravity of the situation and placed a new provision of law on the Statute as 295-A Indian Penal Code. which as it stands reads:

"Whoever with deliberate and malicious intention of outraging the religious feelings of any class of citizens of India, by words either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation or otherwise insults or attempts to insult the religion or the religious beliefs of that class, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both."

This offence under Section 295-A IPC when committed, is not 'cognizable', that is, neither a police officer on duty, nor a private citizen, can initiate proceedings against the offender; only the State may, in its discretion, do so. But under Section 10 (1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1932, the State Government may declare, by notification, that this offence shall be cognizable when committed in an area, specified. Since such offences then altogether stopped in British India, no notification under Section 10 (1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act became necessary till 1947. But the process of events that led to bloody communal riots in various parts of India till the creation of India and Pakistan and the partition of the country itself, with tragic losses in men, money and property is directly and rightly traceable to the attitudes of a section of the majority community exemplified in the matter of Rangila Rasul and the names given to a donkey and a dog. That is how Pakistan was conceived, born and established through bloodshed, and all other explanations are spurious and off the mark.

CONTINUOUS SIKH-BAITING

"During the last ten or twelve years, these pseudo Nirankaris have merrily and continuously indulged in the game of Sikh-baiting and many times it has led to near riots obliging police authorities to intervene. On 3rd October, 1966, these pseudo-Nirankaris, at Hansi in Haryana, provoked the Hindu population into riotous protests leading to serious injuries to many persons and intervention of the police because young innocent girls were being taught sexual laxities of the sect. At Hoshiarpur, at Ludhiana, at Pathankot, at Chowk Mehta, there have been riotous protests during the last few years against gross insults hurled by them at Sikhism and the Sikh community, but apart from dispersing and arresting outraged Sikhs, the Government authorities nowhere have taken any concrete steps to check and control this situation.

Neither any prosecution of the offending pseudo-Nirankaris has been launched nor preventive steps taken by specifying areas, under section 10 (1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, where such provocations to Sikh religious feelings shall become cognizable offences authorising police authorities to intervene on the spot. The agony of the Sikhs is no less intense than was that of the Muslims before partition of India, but the Sikhs have no place outside India to migrate to or to regard it as their refuge, and the Sikhs have been softened and conditioned during the last fifty years to bear and put up with insults to their religion and all forms of other oppression patiently and without demur, under the sinister preachings and spell of the narcotic cult of non-violence, much against the clear directives of their Gurus, their Prophets, not to turn the other cheek before a tyrant, not to take lying down any insult to their religion, their self-respect and their human dignity. The Sikh Gurus have bidden them to reply to the whip crack of an oppressor with a thunder-bolt and not to die with a whimper but to "die-fighting to the bitter end." In Sikh history there are recorded, half a dozen cases where the Sikh Gurus themselves and Sikhs afterwards, have deemed it as a question of life and death where deliberate and malicious insult or outrage to their religious susceptibilities and their human dignity was shown, irrespective of what the circumstances and what the consequences.

On the 13th April, 1978, at Amritsar, a peaceful batch of Sikh religious devotees, disciplined and of high social positions, all of them, marched towards the gathering of the pseudo - Nirankaris, their tormentors and traducers, to protest and plead, but they were stopped over a hundred yards away by the police on duty, till a paramilitary armed platoon of the Nirankari Sewa Mandal, of which Gurbachan Singh, "the Sustainers of the entire Universe", himself the appointed Chief, arrived to murder a dozen and a half of them on the spot and to wound grievously twice as many more.

THE ROOTS

Sri Aurobindo Ghose (1872-1950) is the great ideologue of the modern Hindu nationalism. It is this Hindu nationalism that has come out as supremely triumphant out of the tragic partition of India, in 1947. Nirad C. Chaudhry is a cultural analyst of international repute and is a living reliable interpreter of contemporary Hindu mind. Both of them have something pertinent to say that puts the current tragic predicament of the Sikhs in India into lime-light focus. In his prestigious book, *The Foundations of Indian Culture*, Aurobindo Ghose points out that emergence of Sikhism in India "is a strikingly original" phenomenon in the long cultural history of India, as it is the only 'movement' which is forward-looking and not merely re-interpretative, renascent or retrograde, as all other cultural or religious movements in India during the last two millennia have been. Thus, Sikhism alone has the potency and will to grapple with the future and to come to terms with it, without compromising the enduring values of Hindu Culture. Possibly basing his intuitive understanding on a study of Sikh history, he says:

"The culture which gives up its living separateness which neglects its active self-defence, will be swallowed up and...(the people) which lived by it will lose its soul and perish."

What options are being left, in free India, to the Sikhs—to agree to spiritual suicide by quietly and submissively relinquishing their living separateness, or exercising no active self-defence and thus to lose their soul and perish? This is the ancient maxim of Hindu politics, outlined in the *Arthashastra* (1st. century), under the nomenclature of *matsyanyaya*, the 'Fish Justice', laying down that the obligation and final destiny of a small fish is to submit to being gobbled up by the big fish. It is on record that during early fifties, when the Sikh leader, Master Tara Singh reminded Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru of the solemn promises given to the Sikhs before 1947

India, besides Hindus and Muslims, but they remained steadfast in loyalty to the concept and ideal of an undivided India and a single Indian nation, for which temerity they paid a price, the details of which are not directly relevant here. Since 1947, they have strained their every nerve and staked their entire potential in developing and defending India, on the agricultural farm and in the industrial factory, for fraternal togetherness and for victory on the field of battle. But they are, so they feel, and not without reason that their destiny has been fixed by the rulers of Delhi as expendable, as manure and as a vanishing quantity in the crucible of the Indian political laboratory. Many of our brave and brilliant military Generals have died in mass-accidents, or of coronary shocks of suppressions. Many others have been used and thrown into dustbins. Some of our able and capable Civil Servants have been liquidated unceremoniously, against law and good conscience, through farcical procedures that would not be tolerated even in a literary farce, and others have been degraded and demoralised. Psycho-economic offensives have continuously been planned and mounted against us to reduce our numbers in the country, to obliterate our political significance, to eliminate our natural pre-eminence in the armed forces and to sap our basic spiritual vitality and lower our civic dignity. Public media and law courts have frequently treated us as less than citizens of India, through judicial decisions that hold others more equal in law than Sikhs, the facts being identical and the Law applicable being the same. Our unshaken pride in and loyalty to the integrity of the country and the goal of a united nation has been viewed as unreliable and suspicious and our moves to press and highlight our just demands have often been met with bullets, smear-campaigns, pervert findings of quasi-judicial investigations and hostile policies, and the death sentence predetermined against us is made to appear as without any hope of reprieve. It was in this background that the Sikhs entered on a last ditch, sustained and successful struggle

against the Congress rule at Delhi culminating in the Emergency regime, even when others had surrendered or retreated, hoping that a new dispensation and a chastened political leadership at Delhi might have a second look at the Sikh situation, with a view to reappraising their true legitimate position in India and to afford them a let-up from the suffocation and strangulation which has been their lot, since 1947. In the massacre of Sikhs at Amritsar, on the 13th of April, 1978, the Sikhs fail to see a silver lining. The Sikhs, nevertheless, reiterate that their loyalty to the great spiritual heritage of their country, their determination to stand by and defend the ideal of a united India and one Indian nation and their faith that some day, sooner than later, a new and just understanding of the Sikhs will arise, remain as firm and steadfast as ever.

TRUE FELICITY OF MAN

If man would have true felicity and his existential situation redeemed, then let him accept and act Truth remembering Him, the God.

Let him be humble altogether and thus be one with God.

Let him hurt no one and thus abide steadfast in the inner peace of his own heart.

Nanak testifies for all to hear

God is omni competent to purify and exalt the fallen and the debased.¹⁵

15. ਜਿਸੁ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖਾ ਫਲ ਲੋੜੀਅਹਿ ਸੋ ਸਚੁ ਕਮਾਵਉ ॥
ਨੇੜੈ ਦੇਖਉ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮੁ ਇਕੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵਉ ॥
ਹੋਇ ਸਗਲ ਕੀ ਰੇਣੁਕਾ ਹਰਿ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਮਾਵਉ ॥
ਦੁਖੁ ਨ ਦੇਈ ਕਿਸੈ ਜੀਅ ਪਤਿ ਸਿਉ ਘਰਿ ਜਾਵਉ ॥
ਪਤਿਤ ਪੁਨੀਤ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੁਣਾਵਉ ॥

(ਪੰਨਾ 322)

THE HUKAMNAMA*

Recently two matters have caused some excitement and misunderstandings that have disturbed amity in otherwise peaceful and developing Punjab: (1) The tragic incident at Amritsar on the 13th April, 1978 wherein over a dozen and a half Sikhs have lost their lives and about three times as many injured and (2) The *Hukamnamah* issued from Sri Akal Takht on the 10th June, 1978.

The matter of *Hukamnamah* has given rise to confused thinking and misconceived ideas about it. The *Hukamnamah* contains only a few innocuous fundamental statements and two operative clauses. The *Hukamnamah* has been addressed primarily to the Sikhs, apart from the good conscience of the general India community, and it contemplates no secular sanction or coercive suggestion.

The fundamental propositions in the *Hukamnamah* state that the preaching of the Delhi Nirankari group are opposed to good religion and ethical values and that the Khalsas i.e. the collectivity of the active and committed Sikhs, are bound to oppose the spread of these anti-social and unethical preaching.

The operative clauses in the *Hukamnamah* do not contemplate any secular sanctions against those who may not accept or act upon the *Hukamnamah* and the 'social-disassociation' clause is addressed to the "Khalsa Panth" i.e. the Collectivity of the activist Sikhs, and not to each individual Sikh. Those whom this disassociation clause is to impinge

* The Statement, issued on the 22nd June, 1978 to the Press at Amritsar.

upon, are the persons who were originally Sikhs, but have now permanently joined the Delhi-Nirankaris while still maintaining a deceptive facade of being genuine Sikhs. To the other Delhi-Nirankaris this clause of *Hukamnamah* does not apply. This point has not been properly appreciated by those who are agitated about the *Hukamnamah* being something that might impinge upon matters external to the Sikhs. Coercion and denial of freedom of worship is not in the interest of a proselytising religion and thus is wholly alien and repugnant to Sikhism.

The institution of *Hukamnamah* is as old as the Sikh religion and a *Hukamnamah* is issued from a recognised locus of authority to communicate to the Sikhs a Decision or Directive concerning the over-all welfare of the community. There is nothing unprecedented or new in the issuances of a *Hukamnamah* in the Sikh practices. The principle of the *Hukamnamah* is that an organised community or a Church, or a Society or a group have the fundamental right to safeguard their purity of doctrine and living separateness against those who might try to pollute or destroy it from inside or outside. This principle of the *Hukamnamah* has been bodily lifted by Sikh traditions from the ancient *Brihadarnayak Upanisad* where it is laid down that those guilty of four specified forms of misconduct must be deemed as "fallen ones"—the *patits*, alongwith those who continue to have social intercourse with such as these. The operative part of the *Hukamnamah* is merely a formal extension of the centuries old Sikh baptismal vows. The principle and the phraseology taken over by Sikhism in their baptism all vows is upanisadic in origin and the principle itself has always been the main safeguard of the Hindu Society against the onslaughts of foreign cultures, during the one thousand years. The principle is basic to all organised Societies and there is nothing objectionable in it. Nor does the directive or advice contained in this particular *Hukamnamah* tend to create any social tensions or difficulties for the secular functioning of our Government and Society.

"It is the duty of all right thinking persons, particularly the Press and the public men in the Punjab, to understand these points and to make them clear to the public so that our State can continue to march on the road of amity, mutual fraternity and good neighbourliness in the interest of the whole of India."

THE WHITE HAWK IN THE WESTERN SKIES*

I

Guru Gobind Singh, Nanak the Tenth, is acclaimed as invested with many divine pretensions and regal titles, one of which is "The Lord of the White Hawk", proclaiming his preternatural powers and numenous future. In ancient vedic symbology, the "hawk" *suparna*, is the intermediary between gods above and the mortals below. He is the bringer of *amritam*, the potion of immortality, from the high heavens to the nether regions, and the visible form of the *gayatri*, the supreme mantra, the asonic technique of spiritual illumination. In the world of the phenomenon of the corruptible and mundane spheres, 'hawk' is the symbol and insignia par excellence of Power that sustains and guarantees order and peace and confronts and challenges lawlessness and disorder. The imperial Arabs, the Bonapartist French, the world-conquering Romans, the Akal Regiment of the Khalsa Army of the 19th century, the Prussian Germans, the super-power Uncle Sam, all have accepted and adopted the 'hawk', the 'eagle', as the symbol of their elitistic claims and pretention during their heyday periods of expansion and glory, oppression and affluency, paranoia and predation. But a "white hawk" is a symbol of spiritual Light and ethical primacy, of *lex* and *lux*, familiar and familial to both the "birds, seen and unseen, and it is in this sense that Guru Gobind is the "Lord of the White Hawk", *Cittian bajanwala*.

* TSR, May, 1979

II

Almost half a century has passed when this writer, as a student in India, participated in a discussion of religion with his teacher, an Englishman, during which this Englishman solemnly summed up the proceedings before the class of Hindu, Muslim, Christian and Sikh students, by observing that, if there arose a situation wherein, under pain of death, he the British teacher, were offered the choice of becoming a Muslim or instantaneous death, he would, without much hesitation, declare his conversion to Islam and save his life. In the case of the choice being between Hinduism and death, he would beg for some time to think it over, but if the alternatives offered are Sikhism or death, his choice is already made: death rather than Sikhism. The entire class of students present laughed heartily, for they took the venerable teacher to be in a light mood, and in any case, to crack a joke at the cost of Sikhs, though not Sikhism, is a well-established past-time in the north of India, a game the Sikhs themselves heartily participate in, and which game is encouraged on the sly, with alluring indirectness and artful sophistry by the Sikhs themselves, like the Scotsmen are believed to do by inventing most of the current jokes against themselves and to enjoy the jokes with much avidity. But this assessment made publicly by the Britisher was not in a lighter vein, was not a joke, but was a serious well-considered statement implicating certain subtle and fundamental characteristics of Sikhism, vis-a-vis Hinduism and Islam such as render Sikhism difficult for the secularized and despiritualized modern man, that is essentially the twentieth century Western man, to approach, grasp, and accept. Hinduism has two varieties, the genuine in its wholeness, for the home consumption, and the status-symbol and good-will earner, for export. The genuine, the real Hindusim is exclusively reserved and meant for one born genetically of Hindu parents and in the sacred land, that is, Bharat. *Vishnupuran* gives precise geographical boundaries of

Bharat 'the land that lies north of the ocean and south of the snowy mountains,'¹ and its Western boundary is also fixed as 'the regions where the black deer roam and the *kusha* grass grows.' A man must be born in this geographical region and of genetically Hindu parents, he must accept *Om* as the basic *mantram* of spiritual discipline, he must instinctively accept Metempsychosis, he must worship the cow, he must revere Bharat as the sacred land, and he must believe in non-injury, *ahimsa*, in order to be designated a Hindu, before he is qualified to call himself a Hindu. "His incantation formula must be, *Om*, he must have instinctive faith that the *Veda* as the exclusive source of Truth, cow as sacred, *go-bhaktah*, and he must deem reincarnation, *Punarjanama*, Bharat as the exclusive locale of the deposit of Truth, and he must renounce injury and violence altogether."² Such a faith and creed is impossible for a person to cherish and accept unless he has a specific psycho-spiritual structure, the *ruci*, and such a *ruci* is the result of genetical inheritance, and not of education and acculturation. This undefined ethos, the background of a value-system is not identical with an accepted and adopted credo, but is born with an individual, inherited through prenatal chain of causes, and therefore the sacred text says that "no matter how many *births* a person takes in a land other than Bharat, it avails not at all for the purpose of being a true Hindu" for, "the holy life is possible only to one born in Bharat, even though for a split second."³ He, therefore, who fancies or claims that he has become a Hindu through acceptance, assent or adoption of a creed and pretension of a verbal faith lives in ignorance. California Vedanta, N.Y. Krishna Consciousness, and British Theosophy cannot transform a person into a full and genuine Hindu; at best it

1. Uttaram yat sammudrasya himadreshacava dakshine.

2. Omkar mulamantradhya punarjanama dridhasya, go-bhakta bharatgruha hinu hinsena duskah-Madhavacharya (1238-1317), Madhavadigavijaya.

3. Anyasthane bsithaanama nishaphalan a gatatgati, Bhateca kshinam-janama sar thakam subhakarmanam.

qualifies him for a future birth in Bharat. For our text is forthright on this point: "Through the Grace of God alone a man may hope to be born in Bharat," Vedanta, K-Consciousness, Theosophy and other export goods of Hindu trademark are excellent dried herbs of much beneficial value for man, but they are no more. Hinduism is not a duty or a problem facing every human being on reaching maturity. It is a heritage and a tradition. Hindusim is not built on any cannon or gospel and has no founder or dogma. You cannot opt out to become a Hindu; you must be born as one.

When, therefore, our Englishman had indicated his consent to "think over" the matter if constrained to become a Hindu, he was not quite clear about what he was saying and when he indicated his prompt readiness to become a Muslim, he was aware that Christianity and Islam, both being judaic religions, shared a common rock-bottom ground of ethos and world outlook such as made a transference of religious allegiance a smooth affair.

III

Our Englishman made a point when he declared his preference for death to transformation into a Sikh. For it is true that genuine acceptance of Sikhism for a modern, secularized European wasteland demands a complete death of his scienticised, false and untenable psyche. Modern men become modern by making their past, past, while keeping it or restoring it as theirs, but not an integral part of their current psyche. Values rejected for the present are owned up its historically significant, and they are accepted for a past because the past is historically significant. The impulse towards spiritual wholeness means little or nothing to the modern mind in our civilized and organized society to the end of the zip-coded world. The umbilical cord of human psyche, with its base is snapped and severed and, therefore, such postulates of Sikhism "True before the Big Bang, the creation

of Time, true against the back-drop of the Time-Space, and true when neither Creation nor Time is there, and true ever and forever more." *adi sach, jugadi sach, hai bhi sach, Nanak hosi bhi sach*, "ਆਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਚੁ ਹੈ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਹੋਸੀ ਭੀ ਸਚੁ ॥" strike as strange and irrelevant mumbo-jumbo to him. This firm preference of the modern man for the secondary reality, circumscribed by the frontiers of the senses, acceptance of that only which is reachable through the senses and comprehensible through human reason, has led to the contemporary collapse of modern societies, leading to Marxism permissiveness, hippyism, women's lib, streaking, youth revolt, leftism and atheism, and other similar distortions and the moral decay of the Western World is the logical consequence of the triumph of scientific rationalism and spread of the Marxist fanaticism that material prosperity and affluence alone is the final cure of individual non-fulfillment and social ills. From this malaise, the modern mind can free itself only through acceptance of and total submission to a world-view and a fundamental ethos that transcends scientific rationalism without rejecting or repudiating it and that can uplift man out of and above the world of sensations without annulling or expelling sensations. Such is Sikhism, a world religion and a healthy, happy, holy way of life that transmutes human life in both the worlds, the seen and the unseen, simultaneously. This is what the Sikh scripture *Guru Granth Sahib*, means when it says: Sikhism teaches a Truth and a way of life that enables man to live in this world and human society fully, and at the same time guarantees man's access to the highest apex of spiritual enlightenment." *satgur kio aisi vadyayi, putra klitra vikai gati pai*. "ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀਉ ਐਸੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ, ਪੁਤਰ ਕਲਿਤਰ ਵਿਕਾਏ ਗਤੀ ਪਾਇ ॥" This truth and technique is twofold and is summed up in the foundational structure of Sikhism: "Let man accept and hold fast to the teachings of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, and adopt and live according to the Institutions and Ordinances promulgated by Guru Gobind Singh, the Protector and Saviour of Mankind here and hereafter :

*Guru Granth mein to kicchu likhiya dharo man mein sikhiya
dasam guru ki nit sambharo lok dohan ka jo rakhavaro.*

ਗੁਰੂ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ ਮੇਂ ਤੋ ਕਿਛੁ ਲਿਖਿਆ ਧਾਰੋ ਮਨ ਮੇਂ ਸਿਖਿਆ,
ਦਸਮ ਗੁਰੂ ਕੀ ਨਿਤ ਸੰਭਾਰੋ ਲੋਕ ਦੇਹਾਂ ਕਾ ਜੋ ਰਖਵਾਰੋ।

IV

During the last half century, since the First World War, there has occurred a significant flux of Sikhs out of India to European regions, the United Kingdom, North America, Canada and other countries. The Sikh immigrants had to face such racist attitudes and atmosphere, prejudice and hostility that led many of these immigrants to discard the distinctive lifestyle and symbols of Sikhism, in particular, the royal insignia of uncut, untrimmed hair, the sacred *keshas* and the imperial turban-crown as the head gear. To this degradation these Sikh immigrants, that is, the most of them, submitted to ward off economic and racial prejudices and pressures, social xenophobia and ostracism. This was humiliating enough and tragic enough. But as the time passed, the submission became willing acceptance, and the necessity became a virtue and the stigma of the dropouts, a badge of modernity and progress. A shamelessly demoralized generation of Sikhs arose who claimed their cowardly spiritual fall as progress towards modernity and their renegading as reformation in the faith. The Sikh community-centers, the *gurdwara*, were captured by hook or crook, by accident or design, here and there, and the prestige Sikh religious ceremonies and basic rituals were corrupted and demonetised until these run aways from their great ancestral faith of Sikhism became and have become so bold and audacious as to challenge the validity of the very foundations of Sikhism by demanding and asserting that the Sikh holy congregation may praise and pray to God while seated on chairs in the *Gurdwaras*, that the grand Sikh initiation of the double-edged sword, might be abandoned through desuetude and heretical ridicule until this degraded and disgusting form of Sikhism alone prevails throughout the

world as the genuine version of Sikhism. Public discussions have been boldly raised and pseudo-seminars arranged to validate their thesis that the institutions of Guru Gobind Singh were originally not made obligatory by the Prophets of Sikhism or were not there at all, and that they were archaic in the modern world anyway. Further, that the Sikhs themselves, by a majority vote, are competent to alter the basis of Sikhism, and thus equate with the Guru and God, and finally, that Sikhism is of two equally valid varieties, the one as originally conceived and established, that of Guru Nanak consisting of mere moral injunction and no more, and the other that of Guru Gobind Singh, grounded in initiatory discipline and symbolism and formulary. All these thesis and contentions are not only misconceived, but malice-based and should be obvious to those who properly investigate. The *Guru Granth Sahib* thus refers to such a situation that, "a donkey if powdered with aromatic sandalwood dust would take the first opportunity to rub it off by wallowing in dirt and rolling in dust." *chandan lep utarai dhoi, gardhab preet bhasam sang hoe.* "ਚੰਦਨ ਲੇਪ ਉਤਾਰੈ ਧੋਇ ॥ ਗਰਧਬ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਭਸਮ ਸੰਗਿ ਹੋਇ ॥" (ਪੰਨਾ 267) The British imperialist and supremacist Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936), in the thirties expressed genuine anguish at this grievous fall of a class of the Sikhs: "Should Sikhs shingle, will Sikhs shave, must they mingle with shorn slaves?"

There is surfacing during the last decade and more, a positive, visible and vigorous awakening amongst the Sikh communities settled in the Western Hemisphere marking a recognition of and a return to the true form and spirit of Sikhism, and everywhere over here, groups of Sikhs are urging and endeavouring to salvage and disentangle the integrity of Sikhism, desecrated by, and submerged under the dust and smoke earlier raised by the ignorant and the impudent. In many Indian Sikh congregations, the writer of these lines during his current visit abroad, has heard the musical chant sung in the holy congregation by young Sikh

men and women: "*pevo pahul khande dhar hoe janam suhel*" "ਪੀਵਹੁ ਪਾਹੁਲ ਖੰਡੇ ਧਾਰ ਹੋਇ ਜਨਮ ਸੁਹੇਲਾ ॥" "Come one and all, and receive the Initiation of the double-edged sword, the Primordial Symbol of the dynamic aspect of God, and join the consecrated and the elect of the Earth." In this chant the flutter of the white Hawk of Guru Gobind Singh is clearly audible. In this chant emerges a conclusive refutation of the claims and position of those who live under the delusion that the final fulfilment of man on this Earth is through beef, pork and alcohol, that dollar-chasing is the supreme concern of a clever successful man, that religion is the mask and not the true face of human psyche, that indulgence in pleasures is the highest human awareness that constitutes ultimate frontiers of human consciousness, that half a millennia old Sikh faith can be reduced to mockery and a footnote in the world history by a handful of half-educated species and that reformation of religion and faith need not be the high price of steel-hard undying conviction and supreme sacrifices, but is a mere computational propaganda, grounded in gross ignorance, hate and malice. Do these clever beggars in hell know what price they have already paid for a bank balance in dollars and a bit of real property, undoubtedly clean and good food, a comfortable house, an automobile and autonomous restraint-free tension-filled day to day living? Their state is of the kind referred to in the *Sukhmani* revelation of the *Guru Granth Sahib*: "*rattan tyagi kaudi sang rachai*", "ਰਤਨੁ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਕਉਡੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਰਚੈ ॥" (267) "The fool throws away the precious ruby to pick up a shell and play with worthless cowrie shells on the sea-shore." Those who have turned their back on the institutes and Ordinances of Guru Gobind Singh have deprived themselves of the happiness and spiritual destiny guaranteed by Sikhism, the spiritual solace and comfort that true faith in the Guru's teachings ensure, the dignity of being a living limb of the mystic body of the Khalsa, consolation and fulfillment of integration with the deposit of culture and traditions of their forefathers, the peace and glory of furthering and carrying forward the historical

progress of the Sikh people on the stage of this world and they also have committed the high crime and venal sin of bringing about disinheritance of their progeny from the religion, the culture and the traditions of the Sikh nation. Glory be to the Guru, the Eternal Light of God that manifests in the human heart whenever and to the extent is prepared and fit to receive it. Blessed is he into whose heart the Guru's Light has thus been rekindled.

V

The resplendent wings of the White Hawk of Guru Gobind Singh are visible today in the horizon of the Western Hemisphere in more than one way. During the last decade American men and women of European Afro-Asiatic races have eagerly turned their faces towards the Guru's Divine light. In the Hindu climate and spiritual ethos into which soil and climate the holy seed of Sikhism has been by Divine designs sown, is not directly conducive to *seva*, charity and altruistic service of humanity, and charity and service of fellow men, implicating commitment to public causes is an integral element in the Sikh way of life. Sankara, the great Hindu savant, distinguishes between higher reality and lower reality, God and Godhood. Godhood is at par with human souls and matter, but is *maya*. In contradistinction to the higher Truth that individuality, personality and matter are all *maya*, not absolutely real. In this estimation, *seva*, charity, self sacrificing service of humanity—activities oriented towards alleviation of human pain and suffering and social betterment are not congenial or high priority activities for a man engaged in pursuit of higher Truth, and are not unoften even sinful, impious and ill-conceived owing to implicit militancy of such activities against inexorable law of *Karma* which is Divine Justice. Social service and commitment to public causes harmonizes more readily with the Christian climate and the European attitudes encouraged by Christianity. One

Englishman. F.H. Humphrey, joined the Imperial Indian Police and was posted in Bombay, India in 1911. He was spiritually inclined and thus he met the great Indian yogi, Bhagavan Ramna Maharishi and the following conversation between him and Bhagvan Maharishi is recorded :

Humphrey : "Master, can I help the world?"

Bhagvan : "Help yourself and you will help the world."

Humphrey : "I wish to help the world. Shall I not be helpful?"

Bhagvan : "By helping yourself you help the world."

Our newly arisen American Sikhs, the Khalsa of the Western Hemisphere, thus supply a potency and vigour, a genuine liveliness and power to a fuller prevailment of the Sikh way of life, such as was not easy to actualize and practice in compliance with the Sikh imperative of *Seva*, in the pure Hindu Indian climate and soil and by India and Hinduism-based Sikhism. Again, Hindu *elan* and mood is basically 'world negation', as Albert Schweitzer has pointed out in his acute investigation of Hinduism. European *elan* and mood is basically world-affirming, as Oswald Spangler in his *Decline of the West* shows, the Sikh way of life, of commitment and confrontation within the full-blooded context of the world: *subh karman te kabahu na taraun*, "ਸੁਭ ਕਰਮਨ ਤੇ ਕਬਹੂੰ ਨਾ ਟਰੋ" as laid down in the Directives of Guru Gobind Singh, and the Sikh doctrine laid down by Guru Nanak, that deed and not the creed is the essence of religion: *Nanak karni saru*, appears to be truly and fully practicable only by the faustian temper of the European psyche which strives insatiably for knowledge and mastery over his environmental context and is characterised by constant and troubled spiritual striving. The rise of genuine and full-fledged Sikhism in the Western Hemisphere thus, in a way, is a final fulfillment and completion of the Sikh way of life. To see these American men and women practicing Sikhism in its full development and panoply is to know that the White Hawk of Guru Gobind

Singh has made an assaultive appearance in the skies of the Western Hemisphere. The Guru has chosen one servant of His, styled as Siri Singh Sahib Harbhajan Singh Khalsa Yogi, and that a section of Indian Sikhs in the Western Hemisphere does not accept and approve Harbhajan Singh as a perfect man, such a one against whom no finger of accusation might possibly be raised is just to say that Harbhajan Singh is a human being, that a human being is never perfect, and further, that no man born of woman was ever let off as beyond reproach and accusation by his fellow humans, be he Gautam, the Buddha, or Guru Nanak, the World Teacher. From whispering campaigns and ugly lifted eyebrows of malice, Guru Nanak himself is said to have sought protection of the God Almighty; *ethe othe nanaka karta rakhe patt*. "ਇਥੇ ਓਥੇ ਨਾਨਕਾ ਕਰਤਾ ਰਖੇ ਪਤ॥". It is not known that Harbhajan Singh or his admirers in their spirit and discipline and of disciplinship have ever made such a claim that he be deemed and accepted as flawless, perfect and above reproach. To accuse him of having made such a claim ever is malice unbounded and to demand of him to measure up to such a claim is impudence, tantamount to hindrance and obstruction of the Guru's work that the Guru is doing through Harbhjan Singh's instrumentality. Let us therefore separate and sever Harbhajan Singh's functional personality from his natural personality. Glory be to the Guru who performs His work in the Western Hemisphere through whatever instrument has pleased Him to choose, and blessed be those who have learned from him the teachings of the Guru, to accept and follow these teachings in unswerving faith and in humble recognition of the good that Harbhajan Singh has done them in furtherance of the Guru's mission. The *Guru Granth* tells us that "Whosoever preaches, whosoever pays attention to, whosoever meditates over the Guru's Word to accept it, whosoever explains it and makes it understandable and acceptable, and whosoever accepts it and follows it, is verily blessed and saved, without a doubt, " *Koi gawaai ko sunai koi karai bichar ko upadesai jo*

daridhe, tis ka hoe udhaar. “ਕੋਈ ਗਾਵੈ ਕੋ ਸੁਣੈ ਕੋਈ ਕਰੈ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਕੋ ਉਪਦੇਸੈ
 ਕੋ ਦ੍ਰਿੜੈ ਤਿਸ ਕਾ ਹੋਇ ਉਧਾਰੁ ॥” (ਪੰਨਾ 300) To pick holes in this Divine
 show and the Guru's Miracle is to turn one's back to the Guru
 and to mock at the appearance of the White Hawk in the skies
 of the Western Hemisphere.

GURDWARAS IN PAKISTAN SIKH EXPECTATION AND DEMANDS*

1. A brochure on Sikh Gurdwaras in Pakistan, particularly the Janamasthan Nankana Sahib, was recently presented by a representative deputation of the International Sikh Community to the President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The text of the brochure is reproduced here for general interest.
2. The brochure is addressed to the world community, in general, and to the good peoples and the Government of Pakistan in particular.
3. The contents and the purpose of the booklet is self-explanatory and its publication is timed by the formal acceptance and public announcement recently made, by the God-fearing President, on behalf of his Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, to constitute a "Special Council" representing the Sikh World Community including 'the Sikh citizens of Afghanistan, Britain, Canada, Western Europe, and the United States of America', to maintain and to look after the Sikh Gurdwaras in Pakistan, in a manner required by "the true Sikh traditions." It is understood that the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has agreed to receive, in the near future, "a delegation of the Sikh from all over the world."
4. In the Sikh Dogmatics, the *Janamasthan* is invested with a numinous status and significance unparallel in the

* TSR, October, 1979

hagiography of the other great world religions. Varanasi of Hinduism, Mecca of Islam and Jerusalem of Christianity are holy cities on account of their being located primary centers of worship of these religions rendering them *focii* of highest veneration owing to their historic or associative pre-eminence. Their importance is either on account of their historic antiquity in relation to the epiphany of these religions or because of their significant association with the Founders or Primordial gods of these religions. Thus, these religious places are holy, commanding absolute reverence and adoration. But apart from their religious historicity and associative penumbra, these cities are not bearers of sacrosance, inherent, inviolable numenous characteristic. The birth place of Guru Nanak, *Sri Janamasthan*, in Sikh Dogmatics and religious perception, is sacred terrestrial focus, manifested, not created, by the birth of Guru Nanak at this geo-physical point. This fine doctrinal distinction between the other holy centers of the great world religions and the *Sri Janamasthan* has been clearly asserted in the fundamentally authoritative pious Sikh writings of Bhai Gurdas (1551-1639).

5. This academic point has been made to highlight the peculiar intensity and urgency of the current Sikh desire and demand for restoration of unrestricted access to and effective association of the Sikhs with control and management of *Sri janamasthan*, and their consequential demand for proper management and control of all historical Sikh *gurdwaras* located in Pakistan.
6. The happenings and developments connected with the incidence of these holy Sikh shrines with their historical endowments going over to the sovereign country of Pakistan in 1947 are too well-known to require any recapitulation.
7. The Indian Sikhs as the international Sikh Community, spread over on almost all parts of the globe, fully realize

and concede that any demands they might legitimately make in relation to these Sikh holy shrines can properly be made only to the good people of Pakistan and their sovereign Government and further that, the acceptance of these demands wholly depends upon the great cultural traditions and civilized conscience of the politically mature citizens of Pakistan, and the formal achievement of the substance of these demands is a matter for the decision of the sovereign Government of Pakistan.

8. In this context, the enlightened feeling of the Sikh people in their global entirety, rests justified in hoping and believing that, the Sikh aspirations in this matter, will eventually be adjudged as in no way clashing with the over-all interests of the citizens of Pakistan, with the dignity and high traditions of their state-religion and the world image and good name of the government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.
9. With the people of Pakistan the links of the Sikh People are so perennial and perdurable that it is difficult to conceive of any historical occurrence and development that can permanently sever or destroy them. These links are four-fold: (1) historical, (2) geo-political, (3) ideological, and (4) cultural. They are all fundamental and, in no way, superficial or perishable. Historically, the greater Punjab, the region between Jamuna and Jamrud, the green patch between middle India and Inner Asia, is the true home-land of both the citizens of Pakistan and the Sikh People. This common home-land, throughout history, has been a meeting ground of ideas originating from many different regions, that of Indus Valley, Gangetic Plain, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Iran, and Graeco-Bactrian and Turkish middle Asia. These influences have given birth to a prophetic religion. Sikhism, the only one of its type originating outside the Hebrew *Judiac* tradition of Christianity and Islam. Besides, these have fashioned a permanent national

personality on the basis of which the Sikh Commonwealth of the Lahore Darbar, dreamt of and tried to create and insert into history a new nation, the Punjabi nation, during the first half of the 19th century. The growth and development into fullness of the 'nation' was scotched and frustrated by a quirk of history but the 'personality' subsists and endures. The potency of this substantive entity cannot be wished away or ignored in relation to the future flow and currents of history.

10. The geo-political linkage between the two Peoples of this fertile and pregnant region are too obvious to require a definitive spellout. There is ample confirmation in world History suggesting that, Geography is more powerful than politics and, more often than not, politics is obliged to the painful exercise of thinking afresh.
11. The ideological links between these two Peoples may be discerned in the ideology and insights out of which the Prophetic world religion of this region, Sikhism, has arisen. A close study of the scriptural contents of *Guru Granth Sahib* and the holy *Quran* makes it clear to a keen student that out of the three distinct elements in the holy *Quran* : (1) dissertations on the nature of God and Man's relation to Him, (2) Social organization and ethics, and (3) *Judiac* mythology, the first element has been deemed, in the texts of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, as worthy of serious attention and has been assented to in substance. Sikhism has never held Islam as a polarity to itself and has postulated a universal religious consciousness as the base of both, irrespective of differences in allegiance and tradition.
12. A common language between the major portion of the Peoples of Pakistan and the Sikh Peoples, throughout the world, and above all, the ethnic links between the two, is a factor of such high significance and dynamism such as is capable of transcending all contingent suspicions and severments.

13. In this framework the Sikh International Community, including the Indian Sikhs, hope for and envision such arrangements as practical in relation to the Sikh holy shrines in Pakistan as will encompass, basically, the following provisions embodied in the statutory laws, to be enacted by the Islamabad Government :

(a) All the historical Gurdwaras and holy Sikh shrines of Pakistan may be entrusted to, and placed under the management and control of an autonomous statutory Corporation consisting of about eleven or so representative Sikhs, selected from the International Sikh Community and nominated by the Islamabad Government.

(b) This Corporation may be styled, for reasons of sentiment, as the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee of Pakistan, with its Head offices located at Nankana Sahib, and its auxiliary sub-office, at Washington, D.C. in the U.S.A. where the office of Sri Nankana Sahib Foundation is currently located, or at any other place or country.

(c) The constitution, the powers, and, the aims and purposes of this Corporation may be statutorily determined, such as are consistent with the true functions of the Sikh places of worship and the traditions thereof.

(d) To enable this Corporation to start functioning as a going concern, the true revenues and incomes that were accruable from the lands, properties, *jagirs*, endowments, holdings and investments, etc. of these Gurdwaras, since, 1947, might be compounded with interest without any deduction, and the same may be handed over to the said Corporation as its original fund. A matching grant might also be made by the Government out of public funds as a gesture of ample good-will towards the International Sikh Community and as a token befitting the magnanimity and generosity of the citizens of Pakistan towards a religion other than the state-religion of Pakistan.

(e) All the agricultural lands attached to and forming

endowments, *jagirs*, and properties of the Sikh Gurdwaras situated away from Nankana Sahib maybe allotted at, and, thus transferred and added to the original Nankana Sahib Estate, for purposes of their proper management by the Corporation, and all such lands and properties and incomes thereof may be exempted from all revenue assessments, government demands, cesses and other charges, in perpetuity.

(f) This extended Nankana Sahib Estate may be chartered into a higher type of Municipal Authority with the internal powers of autonomous postal, health, education, and Police services, with the object of conferring free dignity of a special entity on it within the sovereign jurisdiction of Islamabad Government.

(g) All reasonable aid and assistance may be given to the Corporation for setting up and constructing, as soon as may be, a high-power Radio Station at Nankana Sahib, for the purpose of broadcasting, on a global scale, the religious services and other connected items so as to make Sri Nankana Sahib a true and dynamic Centre of Sikhism for the International Sikh Community.

(h) It would afford high emotional satisfaction to the Sikh world, and would demonstrably be in the national interests of Pakistan, to set up a multi-speciality class Guru Nanak Hospital attached to an Institute of Advanced Medical Research and Post-Graduate Medical Studies of international standards, at Nankana Sahib.

(i) Steps may be taken to enable the Corporation to construct a new memorial Gurdwara at the hallowed spot of *Sri Janamasthan* such as befits its importance, and facilities may be afforded for the entire Sikh world to participate, through financial contributions and other services and modes of cooperation, in this meritorious project.

(j) The Government of Pakistan may, liberalise pilgrimage to the holy Sikh shrines to outsider Sikhs, amounting to removal of all restrictions, not found absolutely necessary, in the opinion of the Islamabad Government.

14. The concession of these ten propositions, in principle, and their sincere implementation without undue delay, is likely to be a major historical development in the Indian sub-continent and will greatly add to the glory and lustre of the image of Pakistan, not only in the eyes of the nations of the world today, but also will secure in the pages of History a new shining tribute to the ideology and ideals for which Pakistan stands.

THE ZAFARNAMEH*

1. The young scholar, Satpal Singh of Stillwater, Oklohama of the U.S.A. has shown me the favour of going through the typescript of his forthcoming book *Zafarnama of Guru Gobind Singh*, and has asked for a 'foreword'.

2. I write it down here with the same pleasure that I have had by going through the typescript.

3. The author has made a very readable rendition into English of the famous letter that Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) wrote to the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb in 1705 and in the Sikh literature, *Zafarnameh* is now the proper name of this historical document, though originally *Zafarnameh* is a generic name of any important document issued by or relating to a person of royal and Sovereign status in the traditional oriental norms of courtesy. All letters issued personally by sovereigns, according to Muslim rules of court etiquette are termed *Zafarnameh* meaning, from a sovereign to his legate, and a *History of Tamerlane* (1425) by Sharafuddin is also titled as *Zafarnameh*.

4. Satpal Singh has provided the historical context, the sitting and sequence, for this historical communication of Guru Gobind Singh to Aurangzeb to make the contents of the *Zafarnameh* of Guru Gobind Singh significant, but the historical back-drop that he provides is traditional and not critical. It is now established through critical appraisal that (I) Guru Gobind Singh wrote not *one letter* to Aurangzeb but two, the first in about January 1705 from the village,

* TSR, April, 1980

Machhiwarra, now styled as, *Fatehnameh*, in Sikh writings and the other, the *Zafarnameh* in about May, 1705 in acknowledgement of the reply of Aurangzeb to the *Fatehnameh*, a part of which was salvaged and identified over half a century ago from the archives of the Sikh religious basilica, *Takht Patna Sahib*. (2) It is historically incorrect that Guru Gobind Singh escaped at any stage during his journey from Anandpur Sahib (December 1704) to Damdama Sahib in Malwa tract of Punjab (May-June, 1705) with the aid of two Pathans, Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan, and in disguise as the Pir-i-Ucca. The *Zafarnameh* itself clearly contradicts this story by asserting that he, Guru Gobind Singh, reached from Chamkaur to Damdama Sahib, without any human aid, "With the help of God, the Destroyer of enemies" and "without any hurt or impediment" : *na pecideh mue na ranjideh tan*. (3) It was, in fact, Bhai Daya Singh, the bearer of the *Fatehnameh* to Aurangzeb, who escaped in the disguise of Pir-i-Ucca, with the aid of Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan the Pathan devotees of the Guru. (4) The current document that purports to be a commendatory letter by Guru Gobind Singh, in the possession of the family of these Pathans is demonstrably a mendacious forgery to prey upon the generosity and religious naivete of Sikhs. (5) Though the Malerkotla Pathan Chief did decline to slit open the throats of the young sons of Guru Gobind Singh at the suggestion of the Governor of Sirhind (1705) the document now in the princely archives of Malerkotla purporting to be a protest letter by the Pathan Chief to Emperor Aurangzeb, is definitely a crude political forgery aimed at taking advantage of the political supremacy of the Sikhs in the Punjab during the successive decades.

5. These are not the only historical inaccuracies in the traditional historical background provided to the *Zafarnamah* by Satpal Singh, but all such inaccuracies together, do not seriously distort the perspective which the author seeks to provide to his English rendition of this famous letter of Guru Gobind Singh.

6. It will be seen by the intelligent reader that the Guru makes his major grievance against the Emperor and his Government, the false and solemn oaths taken by and in the name of the Emperor, 'transcribed on a copy of the holy Koran', but broken perfidiously and never unending to be observed, *ab initio*. Herein lies a fundamental divergence between the Aryan insight into the nature of Reality and destiny of man, and the Koranic estimation of the same. Zoroaster conceived of a righteous man as one who showed a harmony between his thought, word and deed. *Bhagavadgita* requires of a true man to observe conformity in his mind, speech action: *mansa vaca karmana*. Sikhism lays it down as the test of an authentic man and his strict adherence to integrity in between his intentions, affirmations, and performances. "Death rather than perfidy" : *pran jae per vachan na jae*, is an age-old worm of Hindu conduct. But in the Koranic schemata of man and affairs, it is not so, and it was the Koranic law that was the only valid law of human conduct for the pious Aurangzeb. In the Koran (60.3), it is laid down that, "Allah has indeed allowed to you the dissolution of your oaths and Allah is your friend." Sir Jadu Nath Sarkar quotes (*Anecdotes of Aurangzeb*, Calcutta, 4th edition, p. 86) an interesting rescript of Aurangzeb on the proposal of Sarbuland Khan, the Chief Paymaster, recommending appointment of a Persian noble as the Governor of Kabul, where Aurangzeb observed (1675) : "This noble has extreme severity and obstinate adherence to one policy only in as much as he has never known subterfuge. Besides, he is very honest and simple minded as cannot at all understand fraud and stratagem. One cannot rule without practising deception. The clear text of the *hadith* is, War is strategem' ...In the opinion of the common herd, cunning and deception are greatly scorned. As God himself in the *Koran* has ascribed cunning to His own holy Self by saying, 'God is the best of plotters', it is contrary to Islam to consider strategem as blamable."

7. The holy passion and anger of Guru Gobind Singh that

permeate the vocabulary of the *Zafarnameh* and determines its climate will be better understood if these fundamentally different insights into the nature of Reality and human psyche of Guru Gobind Singh and Emperor Aurangzeb are kept in view.

LETTERS OF GURU GOBIND SINGH TO AURANGZEB*

I have been requested more than once, by young Sikh writers to say a few words to introduce their compositions referring to the two letters Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708) wrote to Emperor Aurangzeb (1626-1707), one called the *Fatehnameh* (December, 1704) and the other the *Zafarnameh* (May 1705). This renewed interest in these documents, apparently, springs not from mere historical curiosity but is rooted in the current mood of sensitive Sikhs who instinctively feel that the current situation in which they find themselves is, in some way, reminiscent of the phase of the Guru's career, a *dejavu*, the feeling that it has happened before, where defeat and frustration was overcome through defiance and courage, conviction and high sense of commitment that led to victory and glory, self-fulfilment and panoply of power.

2. *Fatehnameh* and *Zafarnameh* are the titles not integral to these communications of the Guru, but are mere generic tags which oriental tradition and courtesy attaches to documents issued by or on behalf of a sovereign to his legate. Guru Gobind Singh was the True King, *sacha padshah* while Aurangzeb, a mere mortal pretender to sovereignty over men, in the Sikh estimation, and, therefore, the Sikhs feel justified in calling these epistles of Guru Gobind Singh as, 'Proclamation of total Conquest', *Fatehnameh*, and as the 'Notification of complete Success and Victory', *Zafarnameh*.

3. Devindar Singh Duggal, M.A. has rendered these

* TSR, June, 1980

letters into English free verse and he has done it well, preserving the content and the spirit of the original as best as he could, and the result is a readable rendition.

4. As a backdrop, Devindar Singh has prefaced his rendition with a life-sketch of Guru Gobind Singh, bringing out the salient points of the Guru's traditional history, so that his renditions of the Guru's communications to the Emperor might be properly appreciated.

5. The Traditional history of Sikh chroniclers states that the first letter, *Fatehnameh*, that the Guru wrote at village Machhiwara in the Ludhiana district of the Punjab was smuggled out of the close military vigilance by the Guru himself as he escaped to freedom into the Bhatinda desert, in the disguise of a renowned Muslim holy man Pir-i-Ucca, and then it was forwarded on to the far South in Deccan where Aurangzeb was busy in attritious military operations against Shia Muslim states. The chroniclers tell us that the Guru effected his escape with the aid of two of his Pathan devotees, while in disguise, and at one point, when detained by a military post for proper identification was helped out by a *Sayyid* witness who swore a solemn and perjurious oath on the holy Koran to the effect that the suspected and detained person was not Guru Gobind Singh.

6. The names of these Pathan helpers and the *sayyid* perjurer are known, and for hundreds of years, their descendents have been receiving generous gifts and comforts from pious, affluent Sikhs as a token of appreciation and gratitude for their services rendered to the Guru.

7. These descendents, right from the early 18th century, down to the middle of the 20th century, when India was partitioned into two countries, Hindu India and Muslim India, rendering the Sikh identity as an infructuous irritant, have carried with them 'testimonials; *hukamnamehs*, claimed to have been authenticated by Guru Gobind Singh himself, certifying that the historical facts are, as the chroniclers say, they are, and no body has cared or dared to doubt their genuineness till the

thirties of the 20th century, when the Sikh savant, Bhai Vir Singh, sensed the intrinsic improbability and blemish of the story about Guru Gobind Singh escaping in disguise and said so.

8. It was at this stage that I wrote, in some vernacular journal that (1) Guru Gobind Singh never escaped in disguise as Pir-i-Ucca, out of the official vigilance-ring operating in the area of Chamkaur-Machhiwara, and (2) that it was Bhai Daya Singh *Pyara* who, in the disguise of a Muslim holyman smuggled the letter *Fatehnameh* out of Punjab and then conveyed it to Aurangzeb in the far off Deccan. This is the basis of Devindar Singh Duggal's statement in this booklet, that

"According to Sirdar Kapur Singh, Bhai Daya Singh was entrusted with the task of delivering the letter personally to Aurangzeb."

9. Now a critical analysis of the evidence available in the form of chronicles and historical narratives clearly leads to such a conclusion, is now briefly given below.

10. A piece of historical evidence cannot be properly evaluated unless its environmental back-drop and cultural parameter is precisely determined first. Perceptions and assertions are not made in a void or segregated situation; they inevitably are integrated to the cultural and mental locus and season of the period. Our Hindu idea of *yuga* 'the Age', is based on this seminal insight and concept which postulates that in a given period, men are, compulsively motivated and oriented in accordance with broad fixed psycho-mental trends. It is to this idea, originally of ancient Upanishad insight, that Guru Nanak refers in *Asa-di- var*, '*Kalijug rath agan ka kud agg rathavahu*: 'In the Kali-age, men are motivated by passion and driven by falsehood': A.N. Whitehead in his: *Science and the Modern World* has given us a phrase to express this phenomenon 'mental climate'. The 'mental climate' of a period consists of those fundamental assumptions which are current in the period and which are accepted as self-evident and which form

the common ground of attitudes and deeds of men during that period. Such presumptions are not expressed and explained as explicit philosophies but nonetheless they form the basis of philosophies formulated, things said and done and attitudes adopted, during that period. The chronicles and stories about the despatch of the *Fatehnameh* and the episode of *Pir-i- Ucca*, cannot be an exception.

11. In confronting and dealing with the ruling, Muslim class, the 'Turks' of Sikh phraseology, the Guru simply could not and would not take recourse to a disguise to escape from danger or to conceal his credal identity. He would not simulate or evade avowal of his identity, no matter how mortal the danger facing him or how compelling the claims of expediency, for, to do so, would belie his own teaching the-behests of God Almighty - *Kahio prabhu so bhakh hun; kahio prabhu so main karoon*, "ਕਹਿਉ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਸੋ ਭਾਖ ਹੂੰ, ਕਹਿਉ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਸੋ ਮੈ ਕਰੂੰ" and to fear nothing, no man except God, is the bed-rock of these teachings. It must be remembered that only a day or so earlier, in his predicament at Chamkaur, the Guru had stoutly refused to leave the defensive mud walls into open safety without first throwing clear challenge to thousands of his enemies beleaguering him, trumpeting the defiance: "The Spiritual King of India and the Paracelete of Hindus now comes forth from behind the mud fortifications, and let, him who cares and dares to obstruct his progress, advance and try"; *pirul-hind nikasio javat ghero tum mein jo balwan*. "ਪਿਰੁਲ-ਹਿੰਦ ਨਿਕਾਸਿਓ ਜਾਵਤ ਘੇਰੇ ਤੁਮ ਮੇ ਜੋ ਬਲਵਾਨ" It may not be assumed that less than forty eight hours afterwards he would behave and act differently. The Guru was not a cyclothymiacs personality inclined to alternation of high and low spirits, wavering will and vascillating creed and conviction, of infirm character. Again to assume the disguise of *Pir-i-Ucca* soon after composing the death-defying *Fatehnameh* to the mighty Aurangzeb, would make the Guru look ridiculous and contemptible in the eyes of Aurangzeb, the staunch Sunni Muslim, who regarded the doctrine of Dissimulation and Disguise *taqqieh* as cowardly and un-Koranic. The *taqqieh*, false

disavowal of faith pretension in religion, prudence in face of extreme danger, is the doctrine of Shia' Muslims, on the authority of Koran (16.107) wherein he who is 'coerced to disbelieve, while his heart finds peace in the faith' is deemed as not blameable. The Koran (3.8) speaks of two kinds of verses in it, the clear ones, *muhak-matahu* and the obscure ones and multivocal *mutshabihatu*, and Sunni Muslims, therefore, interpret this *taqqieh* doctrine verse, differently. The Sunni Muslims, believe that when extreme and mortal danger confronts, that is the moment that lays an uncompromising obligation on a believer to avow openly his faith and through death confirm his faith, *shahadat*. This is precisely the Sikh doctrine also. The test of authenticity in Sikhism is unwavering, steadfast allegiance and adherence to truth, truth of thought, word and deed: *Jujh maron tau sac patijai*. The Guru, therefore, would never pretend to be or acquiesce in being represented as *Pir-i-Ucca*, under any circumstances, whatsoever.

12. We have considered three reasons, so far, that militate against the literal acceptance of the chronicler's story that the Guru escaped in disguise by pretending to be the *Pir-i-Ucca* ! (1) the true structure of his firm, well integrated non-cyclothymal character (2) the central doctrine of Sikhism that enjoins open unfaltering avowal of faith, and (3) extreme unlikelihood of a proud, self-regarding personality acting in a manner that degrades him in the estimation of his adversary. There is a fourth reason which is equally conclusive in the matter. We have the Guru's own unambiguous declaration that his mission as commanded by God, is to educate and persuade mankind to follow 'the right way of life', the *panth*, the way of *dharma* and righteousness. In the *yakshaprashna* of the *Mahabharat*, the "panth" is explained as 'the path traversed by good and true men in the days gone by' — *mahajana yena gatch sah panthah*. In Islam, there is the concept, *sunnah*, of more or less, the same import. Literally it means, "the well-trodden path", but in Islamic terminology it signifies 'the example set by the Prophet.' and thus has arisen an abundance of tradition, *hadith* attributed

to the Prophet Mohammed. That what Mohammed did is its own ethical validity and signification of high propriety. The presuppositions that support propriety. The presuppositions that support the concepts of *panth* and *sunna* constitute and determine the mental climate of Islamic world outlook and the Sikh *weltanschauung*. If, therefore, the Guru had escaped in disguise to avoid mortal danger or had disavowed directly or indirectly his true faith, there would have been no Sikh martyrs submitting to being scalped alive, broken on the wheels or cut up limb by limb rather than buying safety through disavowal and dissimulation. Yet, there is not a single instance known in Sikh history where a true Sikh adopted dissimulation or disavowal to save his life. There are numerous true stories of Sikhs in recent times, the *Ghadarite* Sikhs including, who spurned suggestions of falsification of their appearances by casting away their Sikh symbols in order to evade police apprehension as unsikh like. Bhagat Singh is called "the great Martyr" by political Hindus because he succumbed to such suggestions of cowardly prudence, but Bhagat Singh himself, during his last days on earth, was sincerely repentant of his unsikh like conduct. There is abundant evidence in the earlier Sikh history also showing that the contingent conduct of the Guru was accepted as providing guidelines of absolute Sikh rectitude not to be disregarded in any case. For instance, when Guru Gobind Singh firmly declined at Chamkaur (Dec. 1704) to save his own two sons from being killed in the battlefield, as long as other Sikhs were there to go out to battle, it became a firm precedent of a categorical imperative never to regard safety of one's own family or kinsmen as a matter of priority or preference where there was a question of *panthic* integrity or image involved. As Rattan Singh Bhangoo tells us in his *Panth Parkash* (Sakhi Jambar: 29) martyr Subeg Singh stoutly declined to save the life of his son, Shahbaz Singh, simply to keep his own family line going. His reply was: "the Guru did not care to keep his own family-line going, how can I, a mere Sikh, do so?" *hum karan gur kulhe gavai, haun kul rakhon kavan vadai ?*

About Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, we are told (Sakhi Wadda Ghalughara: 86) that he refused to move his horse at a quicker pace in face of overwhelming danger, as Guru Gobind Singh had refused to do so when similarly situated during his progress towards the present Mukatsar (Jan, 1705). This contingent conduct of the Guru has had the force of a categorical imperative for the Sikhs, not to panic or show signs of fear no matter how over-powering the odds Jassa Singh Ahluwalia's response was (1762) "If I now quicken the pace in our tactical retreat, I shall be looked down upon by all true Sikhs for running away from danger and death in panic and fear" : *Sara panth karego tthattha, ghora bhajai Jassa Singh nattha*. It was precisely this *hadith*, tradition or *panth* of the Guru which a handful of 21 Sikhs at Saragarhi (1897) followed when they fought with eight thousand Orakzai Pathans for seven hours, to the last man, without surrendering. The story as related by the chroniclers, therefore, about the *Pir-i-Ucca*, episode simply cannot be accepted in its literality and was, in fact, never accepted as true by the firm consensus of the Sikhs of the contemporary era and of the days of yore.

13. There is yet another, the fifth supportive reason extracted from the Islamic Jurisprudence, Islamic Law of Evidence and Islamic Penal Code. The *Pir-i-Ucca* chronicle states that two Pathan devotees of the Guru, Ghani Khan and Nabi Khan, move forward, and as we thus move, we gradually shape our interpretation of the past. The historian of the past can make an approach towards objectivity only as he approaches towards the understanding of the future. Our chroniclers and modern Sikh historians said what they saw or heard and "swatted a live fly over a dead one", *likh mari makhi par makhi*, but they lacked the skill of critical appraisal, the art of interpreting through relating the past, through the present with the future, and the result has been sorry confusion in and serious damage to the objectivity and quality of Sikh history. To restore the Sikh history to its true pedestal and stadium is the real task before the Sikh historian today.

SIKH DEMAND FOR POLITICAL IDENTITY*

1. Your main editorial (15th Oct.) is both intriguing and pleasing in its provocativeness to Sikh intellectuals to come out in the open in opposition to the cry for political recognition of definitive Sikh identity and in its disarming reasonableness that raises arcane and ghostly spectres of a "Buddhist nation", a "Jain nation", etc. in India, that is Bharat, in case the Sikh demand for nationhood is seriously considered at all, for them there would be two similar political organisations in the world 'the U.N.O.' and 'the U.N.I.'

2. What is basically undesirable in 'the U.N.I.' whereas, the U.N.O. is all pure like the waters of Ganga, and how are the Buddhists and the Jains to be deemed as at all comparable to the political "Sikh nation", which, the latter, was internationally recognised as such by Russia, England, France, Italy, besides the Asiatic Powers of Persia, Nepal, East India Company Bahadur, China, Tibet and Afghanistan, as recently as the middle of 19th century, and again in the middle of the 20th century by the outgoing British and the Hindu Congress and the Muslim League?

3. Let us stop quibbling and indulging in cheap sophistry in this matter of the Sikh problem and face the hard facts honestly and courageously.

4. The Sikhs were the only nation in the true sense of the word, in India, before the British fully grabbed the subcontinent and they were lured into the finely spun spider's web of

* Letter to Chief Editor, *The Tribune*, Chandigarh, TSR, November, 1980.

Hindu India in 1947 and of a secular India, that is Bharat, in 1950, through gross cynicism and shameless breach of faith. The Sikh's representatives in the constituent Assembly in 1950 refused to be a consenting party to this age-old game of what Kautilya calls, *matsyanyaya* the Fish Justice, the fundamental right of the big fish to gobble the small fish.

5. Eversince, the politically perceptive Sikhs have been watching the developments in secular India in anguish and helplessness.

6. They have no doubt left whatever that their inexorable dilemma is, liberty or death. Our Constitution, while conceding that "all men are created equal", as the American Constitution earlier did, does not, in practice, include ten million Indian Sikhs in this hypocritical and wily pronouncement, just like the whiteman in America a hundred years ago in respect of the black slaves. Slaves cost £40/- each and were in great demand. Patrick Henery, demanding 'liberty or death' would have been as horrified as the editorial writers of Hindu Press now are, at the idea that freedom might be for blacks too. Way back in June 1947, Jawahar Lal Nehru publicly conceded that 'the brave Sikhs of Punjab are fully entitled to the fresh winds of freedom' just like Hindus and others. But later on, he had a second look at the subject and came to the solemn conclusion that "now the circumstances have changed" in relation to any Sikh demands as such.

7. During the last three decades of the real politik in India the sensitive segment of the Sikh intellectuals are fully convinced that they must either gain a firm and unshakable foothold within the political framework of a United India, or they must die. The Sikhs want to live as all living things do, and they do not want to die. The escape-route of sliding back into the omnivorous belly of a secular Hindu Hegelian State wherein lie the temptations of personal advancement, easement and safety, is equally unacceptable to those Lions of Guru Gobind Singh who have been taught that 'the only and final attestation of human life and its worth is in its commitment to its faith unto death', "ਜੂਝ ਮਰੋ ਤਉ ਸਾਚ ਪਤੀਜੈ ॥" (ਦਸਮ ਗ੍ਰੰਥ)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN SIKH WRITINGS

AKALI

Its dictionary meaning is, a worshipper of Akal i.e. the Timeless God. Originally, the Akalis were the death squads of the Sikhs, who spearheaded the task of toppling down the Mughals and Pathan's political hegemony in the North West of India, according to the programme given to Banda Singh Bahadur by Guru Gobind Singh in the year 1708. Eversince, these *Akalis* have been in the vanguard of the Sikh struggle against tyranny and foreign rule and during the Sikh Raj in the Punjab, the Akalis were the custodians of the Seat of Spiritual Sikh Authority, the Akal Takht at Amritsar. These Akalis, the most famous of whom was General Phula Singh, rendered most conspicuous service in establishing Sikh power upto the Khyber pass, but, they never recognised the political jurisdiction of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the King, and always upheld the banner of the supremacy of the mystic Sikh *Panth*, in all matters, spiritual or political. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was diplomatic enough, not to challenge this legitimate claim of the *Akalis*, and on one occasion submissively accepted corporal punishment awarded to him at the Akal Takht, Amritsar for a sex-scandal involving breach of the discipline of the Khalsa.

In the year 1922 and afterwards, those who came forward to organize themselves into bands of volunteers to rescue the Sikhs' holy shrines from the management of the hereditary priests, who were backed by the British Government labelled themselves as Akalis and when these well-endowed historical

holy shrines passed under the statutory management of elected Sikh representatives, these Akalis captured the management bodies and ever since have maintained their position as the manager of the Sikh Gurdwaras as well as the spokesmen of Sikh political ideas and aspirations. The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee holds sway over the important Sikh gurdwaras, while the Shiromani Akali Dal which is merely another side of the medal reigns supreme as the political spokesman of the Sikhs.

NIHANG

Nihang literally is an alligator, who is all supreme in the waters, just as the lion is the supreme king amongst the fauna of the forest. *Nihang*, in Sikh terminology, is a synonym for an Akali, just equivalent to a staunch Sikh. The Nihangs trace their origin from a son of Guru Gobind Singh whom Guru Gobind Singh robed with a blue battle dress with his own hands and a Nihang is, therefore, invariably in blue clothes.

These Nihangs and Akalis were identical till the middle of the 19th Century when the Sikh political supremacy was extinguished in the Punjab and ever since two bands of Nihangs have continued to exist under licence from the Government of the day with the right to roam about in military formations, in free possession of their customary steel weapons of the 19th century, including the right to possess and retain a few old cannons, which are more symbolic than battle-worthy. These Nihangs have their headquarters at Damdama Sahib, a holy Sikh shrine in the Bhatinda District of the present Punjab and they claim that they are keeping themselves alert and ready for the day when the Khalsa will regain its political power and glory.

PANTH

Panth, literally means, *the way*, the good way of life. In the famous sub-chapter of *Mahabharat*, called, *yaksaprasna* the

question is posed and answered as to what does the term, *Panth* mean. The answer supplied is, "The *Panth* is the path which all good men in the past have invariably trodden" *mahajana yena gatahsah Panthah*. In the current religious terminology, the word *panth* stands for the Sikh religion as well as the invisible mystic body of those who profess it and who thus represent the Will of God on Earth. It is to this *Panth* that all true Sikhs owe their allegiance and it is in the name of this *panth* that a true Sikh is expected to sacrifice his all on this earth. It is in the name of this *panth* that the Sikh political party, the Shiromani Akali Dal, fights its elections and runs other political campaigns.

This political concept of the *Panth* sharply distinguishes it from the current political convictions that hold that economic activity and considerations are the sole concern and aim of politics. The concept of *Panth* joins issues with this contemporary political mode of thinking and asserts that the true concern of politics is the ethical and spiritual evolution and life of man in an organized society.

SANT

Sant is the synonym for, "the saint". A saint or *sant* is a holy man clothed with the power of the numinous. The term *sant* occurs frequently in the ancient Pali literature of Buddhism from where it seems to have been resuscitated during the middle ages in India when the Bhakti Movement took birth. Through the Bhakti Movement this term has come to be incorporated in the Sikh sacred literature. In the Guru Granth there is a frequent mention of the status and significance of as *sant*, a holy man, who represents the salt of the earth and the hope of the mankind. Out of this background has sprung a class of *pseudo-sants* amongst the Sikhs in recent years who claim holiness in the terms of the fundamental teachings of Sikhism and thus have acquired much influence in the countryside where Sikh masses predominate.

These *sants* are mostly illiterate or uneducated, according to the ancient prejudice that holiness accords ill with wordly learning and scholastic education. As a consequence, this class of the *sants* amongst the Sikhs is more conspicuous for fraud and chicanery rather than piety and capacity to guide individuals and direct the society towards ethical goals.

JATHEDAR

Literally, *Jathedar* means, 'a captain'. In Sikh parlance it means a Chief of a band of Sikh volunteers who have enrolled themselves into a unit for wholtime service in the cause of the *Panth*, or Sikh objectives. This term gained fresh prominence during the Akali movement for gaining control of the Sikh *gurdwaras* during the twenties of this century when a large number of Sikh bands organized themselves to wrest the control of the Sikh holy shrines from the hereditary priestly classes.

Now, a *Jathedar* remains a local political boss in Sikh politics owing his allegiance to the Shiromani Akali Dal which might be one or more than one organisation, each claiming itself as the true and genuine spokesman for the Sikh causes.

MORCHA

Morcha literally means, a battle-front, and in the current parlance of political struggle, particularly amongst the Sikhs, an issue of confrontation with the Government. Whenever the Sikh people are persuaded that the Government of the day are acting in a manner which is basically hostile to the fundamental Sikh interests, they create or seek for a situation in which the Government has to enforce its statutory laws by penalizing the Sikhs. Thus, a situation develops in which bands of Sikhs come forth to undergo penalties of the law with a view to assert the supremacy of their own metalegal fundamental interests. Such a confrontation is given the name of a *morcha*.

The term has now travelled even into the non-Sikh circles

where similar situations are named as *morchas* by the parties contending against the Government of the day on a particular issue.

AKAL TAKHT

It is one and primary seat of Sikh authority out of the four *Takhts* or thrones situated in various parts of India. Akal Takht is situated in front of the famous Golden Temple at Amritsar and it was established by the 6th Guru, Har Gobind (1595-1644) in the year-1609 A.D. when the Sikh religion made a formal bid to proclaim its basic commitment to politics and social problems. The other three Takhts are situated at Anandpur Sahib, in the Shivalik foothills of Himalayas, at Patna Sahib in the Eastern India and at Nanded in southern India. The building of Akal Takht comprises of a high throne of an altitude three times as high as was permitted to any authority by the Mughal sovereigns of India and it is higher than the Mughal Throne balcony in the Red Fort at Delhi. Thus, Guru Hargobind, by establishing the Akal Takht and building this high throne openly repudiated the Mughal sovereignty over India and proclaimed the Sikh claim to a co-equal sovereign status. During the 18th and 19th and even 20th centuries, the Sikh people have occasionally assembled at the Akal Takht to make national political decisions through consensus which have been deemed as binding on every Sikh. Many of these decisions have been of the nature of an open revolt against the established political authority in the country. The Akal Takht and the other Seats of Sikh Authority, are, in theory, managed and controlled by a *Jathedar* or Controller General and during the Sikh Raj, even Maharaja Ranjit Singh was obliged to submit himself to its decisions. During the last half a century, the Akal Takht has passed under the control of a Sikh Corporation elected under a Government statute and thus the controller or *jathedar* of the Akal Takht has now been reduced to the status of a paid

employee of this Corporation called the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. (The Sikh Gurdwaras Act 1925).

MAHANT

Literally, *mahant* means, the headman, and in Hindu usage a *mahant* means the manager of a well-established temple. Amongst the Sikhs, a *mahant* stands or stood for the manager of a Sikh gurdwaras since most of the historical Sikh shrines had remained under the management of such Sikh recluses who did not observe the outward symbols of Sikhism and thus remained safe from the Mughal persecution. With the destruction of the Sikh power in Punjab in the middle of the 19th Century, these *mahants* became arbitrarily powerful as they came to be protected by the civil laws of a non-Sikh power, the British, in their possession as the hereditary controllers of the properties of the Sikh historical shrines. Gradually they lapsed into many Hindu and non-Sikh practices and adopted even anti-Sikh postures, backed as they were by the British bureaucracy. One such *mahant* was Narain Dass, who in the year 1921 massacred about 150 Sikh pilgrims within the precincts of the Sikh shrine commemorating the birth place of the founder of Sikhism, Nankana Sahib, (Pakistan) and this tragedy triggered off the Sikh upsurge, called the Akali Movement which openly defied the *mahants* of the affluent Sikh shrines as well as the British bureaucracy backing them. After a struggle of about half a dozen years, the Sikhs succeeded in wresting the control of most of these shrines from the hands of these *mahants* and a statutory management Board, called, the *shiromani gurdwara parbandhak committee* was set up to control these shrines.

GRANTH SAHIB

More appropriately, *Guru Granth Sahib*, that is the Book of the Gurus, or the sacred Book which has the status of the last and final Sikh Prophet. It is the Sikh scripture containing

hymns and revelations of the Sikh Gurus and some others who preceded the Sikh Gurus or were contemporary with them, prefiguring the glad tidings of the Spirit which manifested itself in the form of the Sikh religion. Before the passing away of the Tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh, the successor in the line of the Sikh prophets, conferred Guruship on this Sikh scripture which now invariably occupies the central place of prominence in all places of Sikh worship.

SADH SANGAT

Literally, 'the congregation of the good people'. In Sikh parlance it means the Sikh congregation composed of such Sikh believers who are known to be poised and steadfast in the Faith. The founder of the Sikh religion had declared the *Sadh Sangat* and the Sikh Testament as the only twin 'miracles' vouchsafed to the Sikh religion by God for revitalizing and transforming the human society and ever since the *Sadh Sangat* or the congregation of those well-established in the Sikh faith has been treated with a great deal of reverence and invested with much power in relation to matters concerning the Sikhs and their religion.

GIANI

Sanskrit, *Jnani*, a term which goes back to the ancient *upanishadas* and the *Bhagwadgita*, where it stands for a man of gnosis, one who has achieved the supreme realization. He is thus spoken of as 'one with God' and it is this term which has been inducted into the Sikh scripture and the Sikh usage. It stands, originally, for a Sikh who has achieved a mastery over the understanding of the Sikh doctrines and has practised these doctrines in his life to achieve complete realization of their inner truths. One who can expound the Sikh scripture properly is also referred to as a *giani*. During the recent years the term has been considerably devalued, both literally as well as on the political level. The Universities in the Punjab confer

the academic degree of *Gyani* on any person who passes through an average examination in Punjabi language and literature, not necessarily the Sikh scripture, and in the post Independence era, a Sikh is contemptuously referred to as a *giani* by the non-Sikhs with the twin object of denigrating him, as well as avoiding the formal courtesy of addressing him as a *Sardar*—the courtesy-title reminiscent of the period when the Sikhs were the rulers in this part of India.

SINGH SABHA

During the third quarter of the 19th Century, the Sikhs ultimately came to the bitter conclusion that they cannot oust the British Power from their homeland, the Punjab, since neither the Hindus nor the Muslims would join them in doing so, and the Sikhs, therefore, turned their face towards the roots of their religious faith. It was in this background that they invited a Hindu demagogue from Maharashtra Swami Daya Nand, to preach against idolatry amongst Hindus. Swami Daya Nand, who had failed to strike roots in any other part of India readily accepted this invitation and he was warmly welcomed and aided by the Sikhs to establish *Arya Samaj* societies in the Punjab with the object of purifying Hindu society of idolatry and other superstitions so that it may regain its pristine spiritual vigour and thus become a natural and ultimate ally of Sikhism. As it happened, however, the *Arya Samaj* organisation and Swami Daya Nand, both passed into the hands of an element of Punjabi Hindus whose primary motivation was the hatred of and opposition to Sikhism and not reversion to the original roots of Hinduism. In this manner the *Arya Samaj* Movement became primarily a virulently anti-Sikh movement obliging its Sikh founders and office holders to quit it. Thus a positive Sikh religious reform movement came into existence, called the Singh Sabha Movement. The originators and founders of Singh Sabha Movement were precisely those Sikhs who had invited Swami Dayanand to

Punjab and who had fostered the Arya Smaj Societies to begin with. In the year 1873, the first Central Singh Sabha organisation was established at Amritsar under the chairmanship of Sardar Thakur Singh Sandhawalia, with Giani Gian Singh, the famous Sikh scholar as its secretary. In the year 1879, a rival Singh Sabha Central Organisation was established at Lahore with Professor Gurmukh Singh of the Oriental College as its secretary and in the year 1880 both these central organisations merged into one. The clarion call of the Singh Sabha Movement was, 'back to the original purity of Sikhism' and to achieve this objective a large number of social and religious reforms were effected. Thus Singh Sabha Movement remained vigorous for about half a century when under the impact of political upheaval in the rest of the country, the Sikh ethos were transformed into political yearnings. This change in Sikh attitude became reflected in the Akali Movement with the twin object of purifying Sikh practices and of ousting the foreign political power from India.

SARDAR

It is a Persian word which means the *elite*, or one belonging to the ruling race. The Pathans and the Mughals who had become the ruling races in India for several hundred years were referred to as Sardars. When by the close of the 17th Century, the Tenth Sikh Guru founded the Order of Khalsa and on each member of this Order, he conferred the title of Sardar. During the 18th Century, the Sikhs succeeded in wresting the political power from the hands of the Pathans and the Mughals in the entire region of the North Western India and thus became *de facto* Sardars also in addition to *de jure* Sardars. Ever since, a Sikh has been addressed as a Sardar by way of courtesy during the British period by the Government authorities as well as by his own non-Sikh compatriots and neighbours. After India became free in 1947, a set policy has been adopted to discourage the use of this

courtesy title in relation to a Sikh and a Sikh is now invariably referred to as a *Shri* in official phraseology and as a *giani* or *Bhai*, when not something worse, by his neighbours and co-citizens of a free India.

KHALSA DIWAN

As has been explained with reference to the term *Singh Sabha* many central organisations were set up for the purpose of reviving the pristine purity of the Sikh faith and practices, and in the year 1883 when these central organisations had merged into one organisation, the Singh Sabha of Amritsar adopted the name of the Khalsa Diwan for itself. Baba Sir Khem Singh Bedi was the first President of this Khalsa Diwan and Bhai Gurmukh Singh was its Secretary. A few years later grave difference arose amongst the members of the Khalsa Diwan as to the attitude to be adopted in the appraisal of the original forms of Hinduism, called Sanatan Dharma, but in its primary objective the Khalsa Diwan stuck to the original objective of the Singh Sabha Movement. This Khalsa Diwan ultimately became transformed into the Chief Khalsa Diwan which till a few years ago remained as the Central Organisation of the Sikh feudal chiefs.

IKK SARDAR BAJJHON OR IKK SARKAR BAJJHON ?

I have read recently that the Memorial of the Anglo-Sikh War being set up at Pherushahar is to have a Shah Mohammad's couplet from his immortal *Singhan di Ladai*, inscribed at the gate of the Memorial building as :

Shah Mohammada ikk Sarkar bajjhon
faujan jit ke ant nun harian ne.
ਸ਼ਾਹ ਮੁਹੰਮਦਾ ਇਕ ਸਰਕਾਰ ਬਾਝੋਂ
ਫੌਜਾਂ ਜਿੱਤ ਕੇ ਅੰਤ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਰੀਆਂ ਨੇ।

Now, this version of the original text is not only incorrect but wholly misconcieved, for the following, among other reasons :

1. From my early childhood I was taught by my late father that the text is, *ikk Sardar bajjhon*.
2. I still have a lithographed copy of the text of the Shah Mohammad's book over 60 years old that says clearly, *ikk Sardar bajjhon*.
3. The text, *ikk Sarkar bajjhon*, means that after 1839, when Ranjit Singh died, the Sikh armies were *ab initio* and bascially incapable of winning a battle, while Shah Mohammad himself makes it clear, at more than one place, in his great poem that such was not the opinion of any body in those days:
 - a) Shah Mohammada akhde lok sare,
singh lainge dilli nu mar mian.
 - b) Shah Mohammada gall tan soi honi,
jehdi karega Khalsa Panth mian.

ਸ਼ਾਹ ਮੁਹੰਮਦਾ ਆਖਦੇ ਲੋਕ ਸਾਰੇ, ਸਿੰਘ ਲੈਣਗੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰ ਮੀਆਂ।
ਸ਼ਾਹ ਮੁਹੰਮਦਾ ਗੱਲ ਤਾਂ ਸੋਈ ਹੋਣੀ, ਜਿਹੜੀ ਕਰੇਗਾ ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਪੰਥ ਮੀਆਂ।

4. The Khalsa Army itself was of the same firm conviction :
likhia Khalse khat farangian nu,
asin marange tainu vangar ke ji
ਲਿਖਿਆ ਖ਼ਾਲਸੇ ਖ਼ਤ ਫ਼ਰੰਗੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ,
ਅਸੀਂ ਮਰਾਂਗੇ ਤੈਨੂੰ ਵੰਗਾਰ ਕੇ ਜੀ।
5. Throughout the poem, there is no hint, direct or indirect that in the absence of a dead Ranjit Singh, the Sikhs were foredoomed to failure in their contest against the British on the contrary.
6. All the historians, contemporary or present-day, the foe or the friend, are unanimous that only if the Sikhs had not been treacherously generalised, 'army of lions led by donkeys', the British would have lost utterly and irrevocably and the Sikhs would have been the masters of India.
7. It is arguable that had Ranjit Singh not become chicken-hearted during the declining years of his life, there were more than one occasions when he could have taken the gauntlet against the British with a fair measure of hope of success. But he became too enamoured of and dissipated by the charms of Gulbadan Begum to think like a Sikh soldier.
8. It is opposed to the Sikh doctrine as perfected by Guru Gobind Singh that the Khalsa should be thought of depending upon any mortal, one man already dead, for its successful career on earth; it is only the ignorant Sikhs or those inimical to the Khalsa who surreptitiously encourage or spread such ideas — a tendency or conspiracy which should be stoutly resisted.
9. It is on record that the Sikh soldiers when digging trenches at Pherushahar were asked, as to 'why must they fight the British now, when Ranjit Singh did not in his life-time?' and the reply was :

"During Ranjit Singh's life-time the Khalsa was a mere ward, now the Khalsa is mature."

It is obvious that the Khalsa Army was aware of its limitations and curbs placed upon free expression of its genuine impulses by Ranjit Singh, and there was, thus, no questions of the *Sikh phaujan* losing any battle because a paralysed old man was no longer alive in Lahore.

10. *Ikk Sarkar bajjhon* is a sure device, deliberate or ignorance-based to pervert Sikh history obfuscate the true Sikh doctrine to demoralize the Sikhs, to down grade the *Khalsa* and to destroy the historical potential of the Sikh people, and to sap their martial morale.

VEGETABLE GHEE IN KARAHPRASAD UNDER FIRE*

The Times of India writes : "The use of hydrogenated oil for making '*karah-prasad*' in gurdwaras had led to a controversy among Sikh leaders here (Amritsar).

"At a meeting of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee held yesterday, several members went to the extent of describing the use of vegetable ghee for this purpose as an act of sacrilege. Others charged the SGPC with trying to increase its profits by this method.

SGPC office bearers pleaded helplessness. They said that pure '*desi ghee*' was in short supply. They also asserted that the use of hydrogenated oil could in no way be regarded as sacrilege.

Their explanation did not satisfy most members, at whose instance a committee was set up to ensure adequate supply of '*desi*' ghee to gurdwaras".

Sirdar Kapur Singh' rejoinder to The Editor,
The Times of India.

In your issue of the 1st April, 72, a bold-type, specially lined news-item datelined, Amritsar, is published on

* In The Times of India, of 1st April 72 had published a News Service note on the use of vegetable ghee in *karahprasad* in gurdwaras under the title 'Fatuous'. To it, the noted theologian, Sirdar Kapur Singh, sent a letter to the Editor The Times of India, which, for reasons best known to the Editor was not published. Since it concerns a vital question, we reproduce both The Times of India Note and Sirdar Kapur Singh's letter.

page II under the caption, "fatuous", making it obvious that the intention is not so much to inform the reader of an item of news value but to enlighten or entertain him on the occasion of All Fools' Day, by highlighting the concern of the "Sikh leaders", over the recent innovation of using hydrogenated oil as the base of the Sikh sacramental food, *karahprasad*.

"Fatuous", in lexicographic terms means, 'silly', 'imbecile', 'unconsciously stupid', and what could be more so than the "Sikh leaders", at "Amritsar", getting agitated over the religious implications of introducing chemically frozen oils as ingredient of the sacramental food in the central Sikh congregational ritual at their holy of holies, for, it is now a matter of common consensus in India that is Bharat, that the "Sardar" makes the best joke to regale the jaded nerves of the majority community all the year round and not merely on the 1st of April, except when the country is at war with a foreign enemy making it advisable to treat the Sikh soldier, under his new nomenclature as the *Bharati Jawan*, with a certain amount of seeming deference and condescension if not genuine respect.

The point of the projected joke in the news-item under reference is that the Sikhs consider that *karahprasad* prepared with *Vanaspatti* ghee, duly fortified with necessary vitamins and certified as manufactured under scientifically hygienic conditions by mills in the private sector owned by socialists of unimpeachable patriotism, exclusive to the majority community, as "sacrilegious"!

"As it is, however, the Sikhs, in this case at least, are not so imbecile or stupid as your correspondent from Amritsar would like to make them out. Their concern at the gross innovation about the vegetable oils in the matter of their religious ritual of *karahprasad* is rooted in postulates that go back to hoary Aryan traditions of our ancestors and fundamental insights into the numinal religious experience of the authors of the Vedas and their adjuncts.

Sacramental *karahprasad* is not a nutritional food but is

a transubstantiated spiritual vehicle through which the worshipper endeavours to participate in the intangible spiritual substance of the Divine base of human situation. *Karahprasad* is used in this ritual not for providing somatic succour and physical sustenance to the partaker but to raise him to a wholly new and extra-mundane situation of human-cum-divine relationship and any nuances of humour that seem to arise out of hydrogenated oils being nutritionally excellent, therefore, are wholly irrelevant. if not altogether fatuous as well as communal viciousness.

"Again, by firm tradition, grounded in injunctions in the *Guru Granth* itself, the *karahprasad*, in order to be religiously acceptable, must be prepared of butter fat, fine flour, and refined white sugar, and this is so for excellent religious reasons of spiritual sensitivity into which it is not possible to go here.

"Lastly, the oils as culinary items have been consistently adjudged as psychically undersirable by our racial insights into the first Principles of the Science of human longevity and health, *ayurveda*, which declares that oil is superior to ghee only if it is used by a masseur but never by a cook: *ghrityam satguno tailam, mardane, natu bhakasane*. This dictum is based on the Hindu metaphysical postulate, which Sikhism accepts, that the mind has its matrix in matter and it is not matter's antipode, as Cartesian Philosophy conceives, and therefore, the psychical qualities of the food eaten are direct determinants of the quality of the resultant mind. This position is upheld in *Samkhyakarika*, *Bhagvadgita* and *Guru Granth*, alike.

"These are the true considerations on which the concern and objections of the "Sikh leaders" at Amritsar over the degradation and vulgarization of the ritual of *Karahprasad* through preparing it by means of oils are based, and it is certainly not the case that the Sikhs are always and in all respects, congenitally stupid and interminably funny."

